

Creative Life



raleigh**arts**plan

*Raleigh Parks, Recreation
& Cultural Resources*

www.raleighartsplan.com

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African American Cultural Festival

Creative Life

**Gerald D. Bolas, Executive Director
Office of Raleigh Arts**

Developing the *Creative Life* vision has been a process of discovery undertaken with residents and visitors invited to describe Raleigh's character and culture in order to reveal the personality and values of our community.

The portrait of Raleigh's culture that emerges draws a strongly felt sense that we enjoy big-city amenities in a community with small-town feel. We are proud of our Raleigh-nurtured and Raleigh-based artists who travel the world and demonstrate how our cultural ecosystem supports them. Likewise, we value the relative ease of access to great artists and works of art that visit Raleigh from around the globe.

Further, there is consensus that opportunities to participate in civic, social and creative life in Raleigh abound—obstacles to participation are fewer or lower than most other communities endowed with Raleigh's exceptional quality of life. The strength of our community theatre scene is often offered as an example of the comparative ease of access to opportunity for beginners and amateurs of all ages to develop their craft in league with professionals.

Each of us, each of our neighborhoods and each of our personal networks is a potential node on Raleigh's communal network of creativity. At any given time, some nodes are generating arts—making meaning in literary, musical, theatrical, physical, digital or other media. Others are consuming arts in theatres and museums, in churches and on streets, through screens and earbuds. Many work both sides of the transaction, choosing at times to express, at other times to seek, creative experience.

The theory of *Six Degrees of Separation* (set forth by Frigyes Karinthy in the late 1920s) argues that every human is accessible to another by no more than six steps. For most in our arts community, the beginning artist is no further from the master artist in town to perform for the weekend than six handshakes or community intersections.

Raleigh's *Creative Life* Vision

Raleigh is a community connected through arts and culture, where every person is empowered to lead the creative life they envision.

The *Creative Life* vision developed as part of the planning process asserts that there are often fewer steps between beginners, amateurs and professional artists, between potential teachers and eager students, between arts appreciators, performers and creators in Raleigh. *Creative Life* commits to decreasing the

number of steps between each of them by extending the arts throughout the City while connecting already well-established nodes of arts and culture. *Creative Life* strategies are opportunistic and will go anywhere—storefronts and strip malls, parking decks and community centers, streets and parks—to grow the creative network. Its structure is non-hierarchical: locally-sourced artists are as important for a healthy arts ecosystem as globally-sourced artists, so it doesn't matter from which direction the connection strategy is initiated. While money—budgets and admissions, subsidies and philanthropy—is essential to ignite the benefits of the arts, including their economic impact, *Creative Life* strategies also address the opportunities of the sharing economy to redistribute excess capacities—facilities, materials, and importantly, artistic resources—to enable every person in a connected Raleigh to experience and, if desired, share a creative life.

Executive Summary



Bland Hoke's temporary *Banjostand*, composed of cast-off banjo parts, embellishes Bruno Lucchesi's *Sir Walter Raleigh* sculpture for IBMA's World of Bluegrass

Executive Summary

Raleigh has come together to develop a vision and blueprint for its cultural future. The *Creative Life* vision—a description of what success will look like—is the result of a yearlong process of community dialogue, research and refinement, involving more than 4,000 citizens from throughout the city’s many communities. It reflects the unique character, heritage and aspirations of Raleigh, in all its diversity:

Raleigh is a community connected through arts and culture, where every person is empowered to lead the creative life they envision.

This vision is highly inclusive and distinguishes Raleigh from nearly all other cities. It is rare for a community to focus so directly on the cultural interests of all citizens.

The City of Raleigh’s leadership in the arts extends back at least to the 1930s, when it partnered with the Federal Works Progress Administration and the community to develop Raleigh Little Theatre. The City has continued its lead role in cultural development since that time, including founding the Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers in the 1960s and 1970s, establishing the Arts Commission in 1977, creating the Arts Grants program in 1989, and opening Meymandi Hall, Fletcher Opera Theater and the Kennedy Theatre flanking Memorial Auditorium in 2000 to realize the dream of a performing arts center. Subsequent development of the Raleigh Convention Center, City Plaza and Red Hat Amphitheater has shaped an event campus that now hosts cultural events and festivals that collectively contribute an estimated \$150 million to Raleigh’s economy each year. Three City plans precede and inform the Raleigh Arts Plan: the 2030 Comprehensive Plan; the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan; and the City of Raleigh Strategic Plan.

Community Engagement and Research Findings

The community engagement to develop the Raleigh Arts Plan was a sustained dialogue among citizens around three questions:

1. What do you value about Raleigh’s cultural life?
2. What would you like to see Raleigh cultural life become?
3. How can we get there?

The community provided a great range of responses to these questions with many consistent messages throughout the process. The following summary statements directly informed the *Creative Life* vision and plan goals (see Community Engagement Findings for more detail):

Arts and culture should be present in every neighborhood and can provide opportunities to connect and collaborate across neighborhood boundaries.

Raleigh's children and youth have high rates of arts participation and the community seeks even greater access for them.

Raleigh should serve and reflect the cultural interests of all its citizens and should become known for its open and inclusive access to arts and culture—physical, cultural and generational.

The City should prioritize support for Raleigh's artists and arts organizations and encourage business partnerships and relationships on their behalf.

The community wants more public art and art integrated into daily life.

Raleigh needs a range of additional spaces and places for artists to collaborate, perform, rehearse and innovate.

The arts should become more well-connected to innovators in other sectors.

People want ready access to information on arts and cultural activities they desire, and can be encouraged to explore and experiment with new opportunities.

The community strongly supports the continuation and expansion of City leadership in cultural development.

A cultural asset inventory shows that Raleigh is a city with an extensive and varied collection of resources: many arts organizations and venues, an above average creative sector of the economy and a robust collection of municipal assets—cultural facilities, community and arts centers, public art and the City art collection. While there are no nationally established standards for, say, the number of museums or theatre companies a city should have, even in the absence of such guidelines, it is manifest that Raleigh has a number of assets. Raleigh is faced with the opportunity to leverage its existing resources to advance the community's *Creative Life* vision. However, there are needs and gaps in Raleigh's inventory. The findings list needs for a variety of additional venues and spaces. The public art program has set goals for expansion to new areas of the city. Also, some cultural leaders commented on the relative absence of organizations rooted in communities of color. Culturally specific programming appears to be provided primarily through festivals and smaller or unincorporated organizations. Achieving greater cultural equity will likely require efforts to strengthen and grow organizations of color.

Raleigh is also faced with a geographic challenge: its cultural facilities, organizations and programs are concentrated in and near downtown. Yet, the arts demand, which is significantly above the national average, is broadly dispersed throughout the entire city and region. Moreover, citizens clearly described the challenges

they face with traffic, location and other practical barriers to pursuing their own creative interests, as well as providing them for their children. People recognize and enjoy the cultural center represented by downtown's facilities and programs. Still, to fulfill their *Creative Life* vision of art everywhere and for everyone, the location issue must be addressed.

The Plan

This cultural plan lays out a bold and ambitious agenda for the future arts and cultural development in Raleigh—the *Creative Life* vision. It embraces eight goals and 63 strategies—some small and easily achievable, others more aspirational and less easily attainable. Taken together, they will fulfill City Council's vision that Raleigh become a nationally recognized leader in arts and culture.

Goal 1. Promote an Active Arts and Culture Life Throughout the Community

Goal 2. Expand Youth Arts Participation

Goal 3. Ensure Equity, Access and Inclusion in All Cultural Programming

Goal 4. Support the Work of Raleigh's Artists and Arts Organizations

Goal 5. Enhance and Revitalize Raleigh's Neighborhoods and Districts Through Thoughtful Placemaking

Goal 6. Enhance Arts Leadership and Governance

Goal 7. Strengthen Marketing, Promotion and Valuing of the Arts

Goal 8. Create a System of Sustainable Arts Funding

Implementation

This plan was conceived as a "community arts plan" rather than simply a "City arts plan." While the City will take the lead implementing many of the strategies, the realization of plan goals will require the full participation of many community partners. The plan proposes stepped-up efforts to secure private and corporate sponsors, and endorses creation of a nonprofit arts and culture foundation. Given a reasonable gestation period, this foundation could be a major source of the arts funding system. The plan also proposes the creation of a new dedicated revenue stream to sustain the growth and development of Raleigh's abundant arts and cultural resources.

In the meantime, to begin implementation of this plan a commitment of new resources from the City will be required, including budget commitments and a limited number of new staff in the Office of Raleigh Arts. It will also require certain policy shifts by the City and the collaboration of several City departments and agencies.

Context for the Plan



Miriam Preston Block Gallery in the Raleigh Municipal Building

Raleigh's History and Strategic Plans Supporting the Arts

"What is the role of the City of Raleigh in supporting arts and culture?" Responses of Raleigh's residents, workers and visitors to this question overwhelmingly support the City to take the lead in sustaining and expanding arts and cultural opportunities. It should be noted that Raleigh's elected leaders and City staff have answered this question with many different leadership initiatives over the years, including capital investments, formation of citizen leadership groups, grants to arts organizations, development of an event campus downtown, and allocations of funds for temporary and permanent public art projects.

Today, visitors to Raleigh's city hall find the arts front and center when they enter the Avery C. Upchurch Municipal Complex (better known as the Raleigh Municipal Building) through the beautiful two-story Miriam Preston Block Gallery. But by the time the Block Gallery opened in 1984, the City already had a long history of commitment to the arts.

For example, the City partnered with residents and the Federal Works Progress Administration in the 1930s to build the Raleigh Little Theatre, which opened in 1940, and assisted with the costs of later additions to the Theatre in the 1980s and 1990s. Subsequently, the City has provided capital for acquisition of and improvements to buildings for Theatre in the Park, Artspace, Arts Together, Burning Coal Theatre Company and CAM Raleigh.

In 1977, City Council charged the newly-appointed Raleigh Arts Commission to serve as the "official municipal advisory body on the arts broadly defined, which will promote, coordinate and strengthen public programs to further the cultural development of the City." One of the Commission's first steps was to organize a citywide festival, Artsposure, which celebrates its 37th anniversary in 2016. Other Commission initiatives resulted in the founding of Arts Access in the early 1980s and the annual Street Painting Festival that is now part of SPARKcon. The Commission's inaugural public art project, Dale Eldred's 40-foot-high *Light + Time Tower* erected in 1995, provoked dialogue throughout the community that paved the way for today's growing collection of public art.

Recognizing the need for a predictable funding mechanism to support arts organizations, in 1988 City Council adopted a per capita formula allocating \$3 per resident for the arts each year. (For FY16 the per capita allocation is \$5 per resident). The following year, 1989, the Arts Commission organized an arts grant program to distribute per capita funds. To date, more than \$28 million in arts grants have been invested in Raleigh arts organizations.

The Parks and Recreation Department founded the Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers in the 1960s and 1970s, respectively, to provide instruction in the arts and support growth of avocational artists. In the intervening

years the renamed Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department has offered hundreds of art programs at community centers and event venues throughout Raleigh while assuming responsibility for management of seven different historic properties, including Mordecai Historic Park and the City of Raleigh Museum.

Construction in 2000 of Meymandi Hall, Fletcher Opera Theater and the Kennedy Theatre flanking Memorial Auditorium realized the dream of a performing arts center. Subsequent development of the Raleigh Convention Center, City Plaza and Red Hat Amphitheater has shaped an event campus that now hosts cultural events and festivals that collectively contribute an estimated \$150 million to Raleigh's economy each year.

City Council passed a Half-percent for Art ordinance and appointed a Public Art and Design Board in 2009 to provide public art in new City projects by allocating a half-percent of construction costs for public art. Since then, more than a dozen projects have been initiated, with five completed at facilities as diverse as the Buffalo Road Aquatic Center and the Wilders Grove Solid Waste Services Facility.

In 2011, the Office of Raleigh Arts was organized in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department to administer the portfolios of the Raleigh Arts Commission and Public Art and Design Board and support the Pullen and Sertoma Art Centers. In addition to managing the arts grants process, the Office of Raleigh Arts commissions temporary and permanent public art projects, curates exhibitions of local artists at the Block Gallery, maintains the Municipal Art Collection, and recognizes arts community leaders, writers and young artists with the Raleigh Medal of Arts, Piedmont Laureate and Gifts of Gold programs.

City initiatives like those noted above result from strategic and long-range plans to enhance quality of life and increase economic returns on investment for taxpayers. Three City plans precede and inform the Raleigh Arts Plan: the 2030 Comprehensive Plan; the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan; and the City of Raleigh Strategic Plan.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2009, sets out policies and actions specifically addressing public art, arts districts and facilities, and support for artists and cultural organizations. The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan, adopted in 2014, outlines goals that address becoming a national leader supporting the arts, increasing accessibility to the arts, and nurturing the growth of Raleigh's creative community.

In April 2015, City Council adopted a Strategic Plan with this key focus for Raleigh's arts and cultural resources: "Embrace Raleigh's diverse offerings of arts and cultural resources as iconic celebrations of our community that provide entertainment, community and economic benefit." In response to that goal and to the

expressed desires of the residents, this arts plan emphasizes creating the conditions where all citizens can lead expressive and creative lives. To enable this, the *Creative Life* plan provides for delivery of arts and cultural services in neighborhoods, makes provision for youth and avocational artists, and supports Raleigh's artists and cultural groups to ensure that they are able to provide high quality and innovative programs throughout the community.

Community Engagement and Research Findings



Community conversation conducted as part of the Raleigh Arts Plan community engagement

Community Engagement and Research Findings

The Planning Process

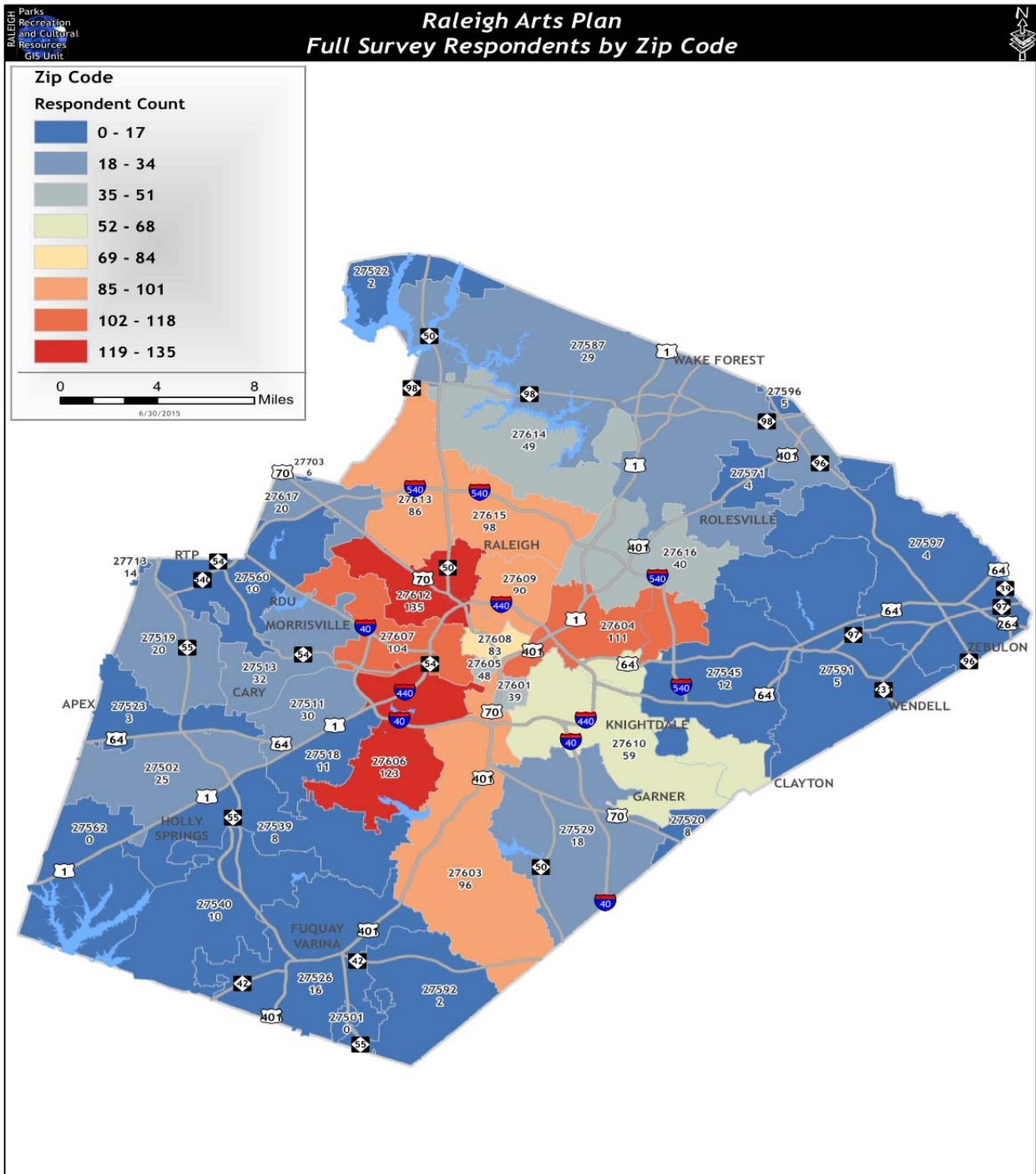
Raleigh is a city that values community engagement. It is especially important when the subject of planning is the community's vision for its cultural future. Everyone has a stake in the city's way of life, so it is essential to hear from diverse parts of Raleigh's communities. Incorporating multiple voices in the development of the Raleigh Arts Plan was a goal from the start of the planning process. Community engagement was extensive and comprehensive. The planning process created multiple entryways for people and organizations to participate in ways that best suited them, using surveys, community conversations, stakeholder discussions, online engagement and individual interviews. Community engagement was sustained over 10 months to ensure a meaningful opportunity to register opinions and organize others to participate. More than 4,000 people in total participated in the development of the Raleigh Arts Plan:

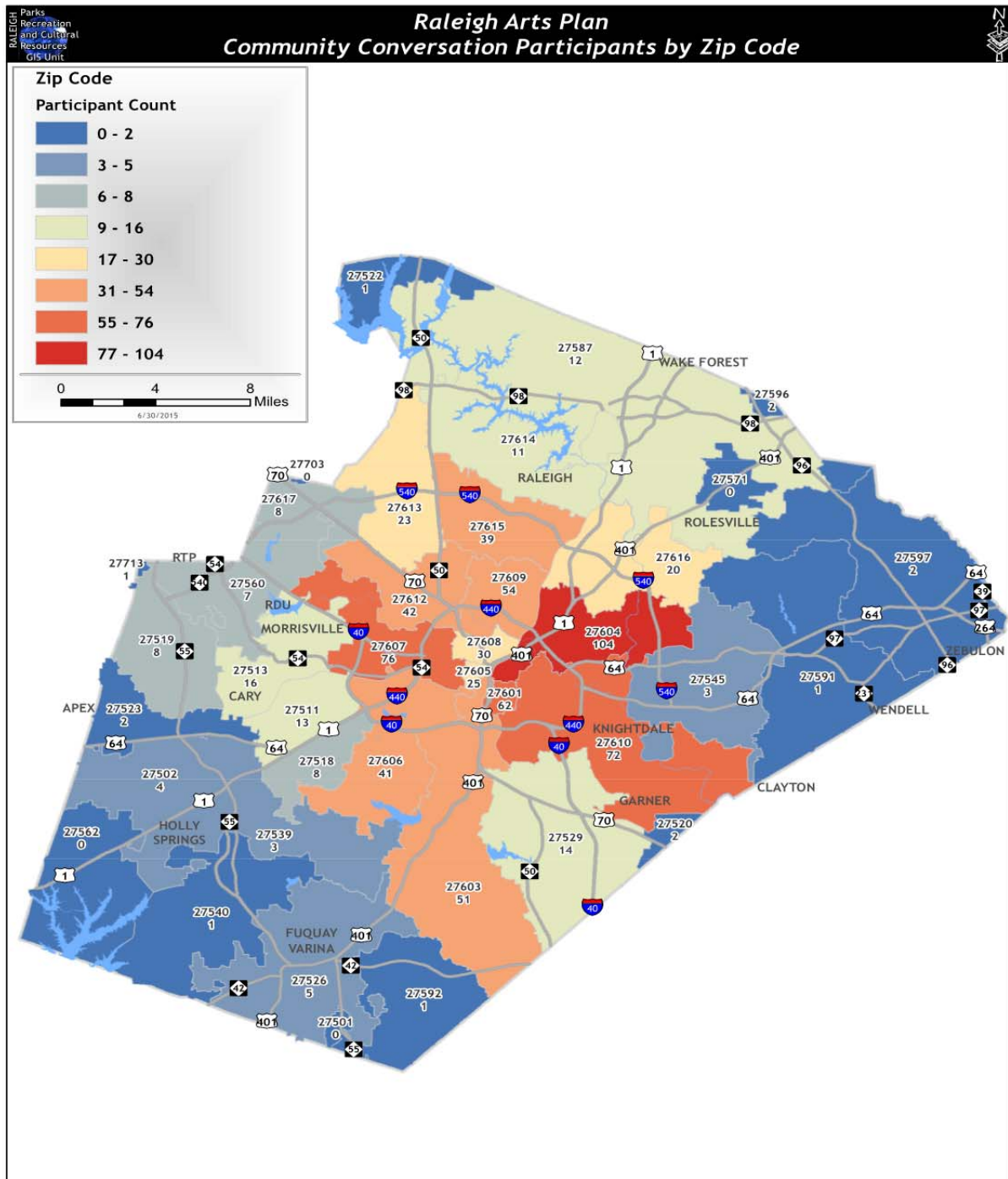
- 2,500+ survey respondents (mail and online)
- 900+ individuals attending 75 community conversations and 20 discussion groups
- 35 persons interviewed individually
- 528 respondents to intercept surveys conducted at festivals and community events
- 141 participants in the online discussion through social media and the website www.RaleighArtsPlan.com

The planning process was overseen and supported by a 34-member steering committee composed of leadership from across many sectors of the community: the arts, business, education, government, human services and others. This was a highly active group of leaders, most of whom hosted community conversations and contributed in multiple ways to the visibility and success of community engagement.

Community engagement employed a "triangulation methodology" that acknowledges the strengths and limitations of any given planning tool and generates an accurate, collective portrait of the community's aspirations and suggestions for arts and cultural development.

The following two maps illustrate a strength of the triangulation approach. The first shows the location of survey respondents, with the highest concentrations in the northern and western areas of the city. The second shows the location of participants in community conversations. The highest concentrations include areas less well-covered through the survey, especially in the eastern and southeastern areas of the city.





Community Engagement Findings

In its simplest terms, the overall inquiry for the Raleigh Arts Plan was a sustained dialogue among citizens around three questions:

1. What do you value about Raleigh's cultural life?
2. What would you like to see Raleigh cultural life become?
3. How can we get there?

The community provided a great diversity of responses to these questions with many consistent messages heard throughout the process. These findings include a mixture of needs and aspirations.

Raleigh should become a "City of the Arts" that provides all who live and work here with arts experiences and learning opportunities.

Raleigh has a strong sense of community and a tradition of the arts. Residents expressed an overarching desire that Raleigh become a city that celebrates the arts and culture, making them a celebrated part of its civic identity. Raleigh has a long involvement with community arts, and this desire includes the notion that everyone should have plentiful access to amateur as well as professional opportunities for arts and cultural activities. Indeed, the title of this plan, *Creative Life*, is a reflection of a populist vision in which every citizen can lead an expressive and creative life.

Raleigh should serve and reflect the cultural interests of all its citizens.

Raleigh believes one goal of arts and cultural development is to serve the interests of all citizens. Resources and policy should be directed to inclusion, making available more opportunities to engage all Raleigh residents and communities in activities that are relevant to them. This conviction is more than catering to differing tastes; it considers the arts to be a powerful tool for bringing people together in a community, as demonstrated in Raleigh's annual fall season of festivals, which brings large numbers of people together for communal experiences through art, music, culture and community creativity.

Raleigh should become known for inclusive physical, cultural and geographical access to arts and culture.

Inherent in Raleigh's desire to become a "City of the Arts" is the conviction that arts and culture be inclusive by "reducing and accommodating physical and geographic barriers. It also means appreciation and understanding of different abilities and perspectives as well as broad efforts to reflect the diverse cultural interests of residents and make available programming that captures the attention of people across the entire community. This ambitious goal is based on a profound belief in the value of diversity in a community, and the

value of having everyone participate in and contribute to the life of the community. The Office of Raleigh Arts is currently working to move the City forward in these areas through its learning community of arts organizations focusing on universal access for people with disabilities and its funding for festivals and events that engage a very broad range of cultural interests. Also, Raleigh Little Theatre and the City's Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers are examples of organizations serving the community's strong interest in avocational and pre-professional arts training.

Raleigh rates the quality of current arts and cultural offerings highly, with room for improvement in affordability, availability and variety.

In the surveys conducted, Raleigh's residents express high satisfaction with the quality of available arts and cultural offerings; 30% rate them as excellent and 51% as good. About one third also identifies the need for improvements in the affordability, availability and variety of offerings. These opinions provide essential guidance for those seeking to expand or diversify their audiences.

Raleigh celebrates its heritage and history with a focus on preserving the stories of its people and places through the arts.

Planning participants value their heritage and history and view them as essential elements of Raleigh's collective culture. They believe the arts are an excellent means of preserving and extending the stories of their diverse community.

People seek to be well-connected through shared cultural interests.

Planning participants express the desire for greater connectivity through arts and culture. They seek more connectivity in downtown and in the neighborhoods, a vibrant life on the street level, and more collaborative opportunities for artists and creatives.

Arts and culture should be present in every neighborhood and can provide opportunities to connect and collaborate across neighborhood boundaries.

The majority of Raleigh's cultural venues and activities are concentrated in and near downtown. Yet the majority of the city's population lives elsewhere and the city is large enough that geography has become a barrier. Traffic and distance make it imperative that cultural programs be available closer to where people live so they can more readily access activities they desire for themselves and their children. Beyond the practical, people also express pride and interest in their neighborhoods. Neighborhood events such as the Boylan Heights ArtWalk, Cook Street Carnival and Kirby Derby are already a vibrant part of city life. They serve to celebrate the culture of a neighborhood, connect residents through shared experiences and invite people from elsewhere to get to know another part of their city.

Raleigh's citizens place a priority on communal and informal cultural experiences.

Raleigh's residents express that their highest demand is for more communal and informal experiences: more live performances and events in non-traditional spaces such as coffee shops, bars and parks; festivals such as music, art and film festivals; and neighborhood festivals and celebrations. This aligns with Raleigh's populist culture and relatively horizontal society. There is also secondary demand for more traditional performing arts experiences in venues like concert halls and theatres.

Raleigh has high rates of personal participation in arts activities and a tradition of valuing community arts.

In the surveys conducted, people often commented on Raleigh having a tradition of community arts, meaning personal, amateur participation in arts activities. Nearly everyone has a personal creative interest, with the three most common being photography, reading and cooking. About one third of those surveyed play a musical instrument and one third draw or paint. Almost 20% of residents sing in a choir. The amount and variety of these personal interests is also reflected in long-standing groups and organizations such as North Carolina Master Chorale, Theatre in the Park and Raleigh Civic Symphony Association. Personal participation has both an individual and social dimension: 38% say they participate on their own as a leisure activity or hobby, and 20% participate as a way to share time with friends or family.

Raleigh's children and youth have high rates of arts participation and the community seeks even greater access for them.

Raleigh's children and youth are as arts-involved as adults. More than three-quarters of families surveyed reported that their children participate in arts activities in school, outside of school or in community settings (e.g. with private providers, at arts centers). One third of all residents desire more arts and cultural events and activities for children and teens, and believe the City should support arts and cultural programs for youth after school and during the summer. In community conversations, interviews, discussion groups and the town hall meeting, participants discussed their belief in the value of arts as a part of a child's education and development. However, many believe that the arts are not equitably available to all Raleigh's children and would like consistent, long-term access for all young people.

People want ready access to information on arts and cultural activities they desire, and can be encouraged to explore and experiment with new opportunities.

There was a consistent call for a one-stop information source for arts and culture. The number one reason people don't participate more is because they don't hear about activities in time to attend. After that, barriers are practical: traffic, cost, scheduling and location. Citizens want to learn about available performances and events as well as learning and participatory opportunities like workshops, classes and community arts groups such as choirs, knitting circles and book clubs.

The City should prioritize support for Raleigh's artists and arts organizations and encourage business partnerships and relationships on their behalf.

Artists and arts organizations are fundamental to the cultural vitality of the city and community participants believe that Raleigh must recognize and support them. The community also acknowledges the quality and scope of the artistic community that encompasses artist-led start-ups, major arts institutions and an array of community arts activities throughout the city. The City of Raleigh currently provides significant annual support to nonprofit arts organizations. The City has also been a leader in developing cultural facilities such as the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts and venues such as the festival spaces in and near Fayetteville Street. There is a broad range of additional supports that can be catalytic for artists and organizations. This includes financial support, but just as important is the desire for stronger relationships with the private sector. There is a belief that the arts and business share common interests: ensuring a high quality of life, providing a community that attracts and retains desirable employees, augmenting economic growth, demonstrating intellectual and artistic leadership, addressing civic issues and enhancing the city's national identity. Citizens also believe it is an important statement for the City and other civic leadership to publicly acknowledge and celebrate Raleigh's arts community as a vital component of the city's vitality and uniqueness.

The arts should become more well-connected to innovators in other sectors.

Raleigh's definition of arts and culture encompasses creativity in many arenas. Planning participants often commented on the extraordinary creativity present in businesses, organizations and higher education found throughout the Triangle region. There is a desire among those in the arts community to forge stronger connections with innovators in other fields such as high technology and biomedical engineering. Part of this desire is the recognition that creativity can connect and inspire people. Another part is to identify common interests between arts and businesses for mutual benefit, whether through joint creative projects, creativity training, or executive service on arts boards.

Raleigh's arts and cultural community seeks to become better connected to and integrated with the entire region.

Raleigh's arts and cultural community recognizes that it is part of a region but is not limited by political boundaries. Raleigh's arts audience, for example, is manifestly regional, with residents choosing among cultural offerings throughout the Triangle. This is viewed not only as competition but rather as an opportunity to increase regional audience attendance. Raleigh's artists and arts organizations view stronger regional connections within the arts community as productive. They see great possibility for joint initiatives, creative collaboration and strength in numbers.

Raleigh needs a range of additional spaces and places for artists to collaborate, perform, rehearse and innovate.

Raleigh has developed a remarkable collection of cultural facilities and places, from the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts and the Red Hat Amphitheater to downtown's many music clubs and emerging Warehouse District. Still, the arts and cultural community identified a broad range of needs for additional facilities, venues, studios and live-work spaces. Most of the desired spaces are smaller-scale and may have a communal dimension: places where artists can come together in a variety of ways to create, collaborate and build community through shared experiences. They also seek spaces that will make their work more visible and available in the community. Specific facility needs mentioned include an approximately 1,500-seat theatre suitable for opera, theatre, music and dance; smaller, flexible performance venues (300-500 seats, and black box); rehearsal, recording and informal performance spaces for dance, music and theatre; and informal music venues such as Raleigh's clubs for acoustic music and bands. There is also strong desire for new artist or creative districts. Artists' live-work, studio and makers' spaces are viewed as an excellent way to meet the needs of artists who might potentially create new arts districts. Raleigh remains relatively affordable; however, this is changing quickly. This underscores the opportunity the community has to address its space needs while costs are more manageable and while the creative community has greater influence over its future.

The community wants more public art and art integrated into daily life.

The City of Raleigh has a vital public art program, overseen by the Public Art and Design Board, that continues to expand opportunities for public art. In this planning process, the community gave public art a resounding vote of confidence and called for an expansion of the program in several ways. Residents and workers value the presence of art in everyday life, where art enlivens an otherwise quotidian experience, where one can be surprised by a work of art in an unexpected place, and where art is found along a trail or in a shopping center. The community has already broadened its definition of public art to include citizen-initiated projects, which are the subject of a recent and supportive new City policy.

The community strongly supports the continuation and expansion of City leadership in cultural development.

There is overwhelming support for the City of Raleigh to continue to play a major or leading role in cultural development—fully 92% of citizens. Citizens identify priorities for City action as supporting artists and arts organizations, and providing more public art.

Community discussion groups yielded a wealth of specific suggestions.

During the community conversations and discussion groups, participants had numerous insightful suggestions describing the creative life they would like to see in Raleigh. Here are some examples:

- Staging unexpected shows in places of cultural significance
- More art in unexpected places, such as shoe shops, barber shops and beauty salons
- Integrating more arts programming in community centers
- Teen Arts Pass/Teen Arts Festival (teen-created)
- Going to where the youth are with mobile arts
- Long-term engagement with youth in schools
- Creating a church/religious institution coalition around the arts
- Connecting with the Triangle region where it makes sense
- Creating a mobile app for arts and cultural opportunities in Raleigh
- Entertainment district on New Bern Ave
- Using the Dorothea Dix property for arts and culture
- Juried art program for a Raleigh jazz festival

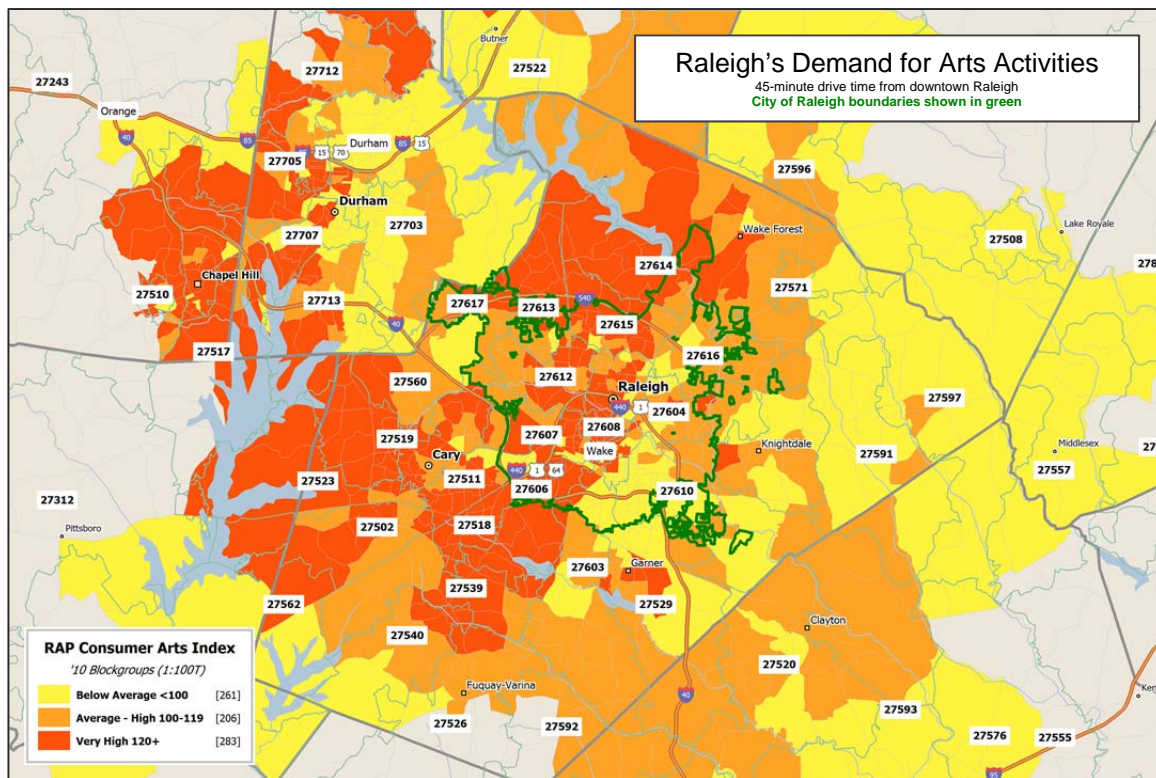


Thomas Sayre's *Cree Shimmer Wall* seen from the Red Hat Amphitheater

Raleigh's Market for the Arts

One goal of the Raleigh Arts Plan is to identify ways to expand Raleigh's current arts participation and serve a broader range of Raleigh's population. To understand the overall level and character of demand for arts activities in Raleigh, the research team reviewed data on consumer demand for the arts within a 45-minute drive time centered on downtown Raleigh (source: ESRI data). Measured arts activities included visiting museums; attending live theater, music and dance performances; and personal participation such as painting, playing musical instruments and cooking. An average arts demand index was computed and used to identify areas of very high, average and below average arts demand. The following "heat map" shows the geographic distribution of this demand. The Raleigh city boundaries are shown in green.

To gain insight into who is currently being served by the arts in Raleigh, the research team analyzed audiences from 22 nonprofit arts organizations supported by the City of Raleigh, encompassing a total of 117,812 households in the region (within the 45-minute drive time of downtown Raleigh). The team identified the geographic location and household characteristics of these arts consumers. Then, they compared these attendee households to the remainder—or non-arts-affiliated households—in the local area. The following are the key findings of this analysis.



22 Raleigh Arts Organizations Participating in the Market Research
(n = number of participants/audience members)

Arts Together (n=820)	NC Symphony (n=16,609)
Artspace (n=1,087)	NC Theatre (n=17,583)
Artsposure (n=1,144)	North Raleigh Arts & Creative Theatre (n=3,594)
CAMRaleigh (n=2,110)	Performance Edge (n=581)
Carolina Ballet (n=15,386)	Philharmonic Association (n=2,203)
City Arts Programs (n=4,693)	PineCone (n=1,641)
Community Music School (n=428)	Raleigh Chamber Music Guild (n=2,505)
Duke Energy Center (n=62,938)	Raleigh Little Theatre (n=9,563)
Justice Theater Project (n=1,193)	Raleigh Symphony Orchestra (n=292)
NC Master Chorale (n=801)	Theatre in the Park (n=4,916)
NC Opera (n=2,956)	Visual Art Exchange (n=1,282)

Arts Market Research Findings

- The overall level of demand for arts activities within the City of Raleigh (green boundaries) is very strong: 16% greater than the national average.
- Those currently well-served, and the most frequent attendees, fit the national portrait of arts audiences: they are more often in higher socio-economic groups and are more likely to be Caucasian.
- Those less well-served—those participating the least—appear to have practical barriers of cost and time, but also may be limited by location and the type of programming available.
- More than a third (35%) of households currently affiliated with Raleigh arts organizations reside *outside* the 45-minute drive to downtown.
- There is relatively little overlap in audiences among the arts organizations. More than three-quarters of those participating attend only one of the 22 organizations in the study. This is described as the number of organizational affiliations for each household.
- Raleigh arts organizations have between 2% and 30% reach into households that show high arts demand. For households that show average arts demand, reach is between 2% and 11%. Reach is substantially lower for households showing below-average arts demand: between 1% and 6%.

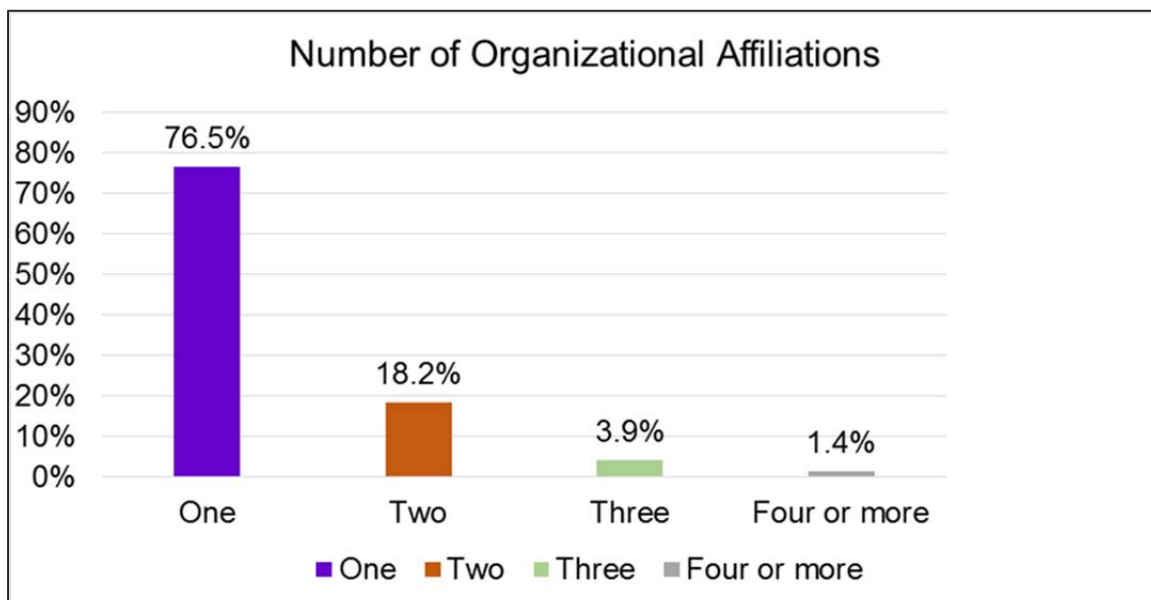
Arts Market Research Conclusions

There are several conclusions drawn from this research:

- With high overall demand for arts activities in and near Raleigh, there is a clear opportunity to expand geographic distribution of activities to reach population groups that show average and

below-average arts demand and that are currently reached by Raleigh arts organizations at low rates. This is in line with the community's expressed desire to extend inclusion in the arts.

- In overall terms, the goal of serving all of Raleigh's population can be approached by a continued focus on nurturing the current audiences while cultivating households in areas showing lower demand. This can be accomplished by a combination of audience development strategies: providing programming in different locations closer to the audience; and addressing practical barriers such as cost, scheduling and transportation.
- New audiences can be nurtured by addressing cultural factors such as the type of programming, approaches to introducing people to new experiences, and coordinated efforts involving groups of organizations.
- Efforts to broaden and diversify Raleigh's arts participation should be aimed primarily at the 53% of market households in the areas that are not well-served or are just keeping pace with expected demand. Other opportunities include marketing to new residents and those living outside Raleigh but within the 45-minute drive time.
- Because a few Raleigh arts organizations are already serving audience members who are *not* high-demand consumers (and are generally lower income, geographically dispersed or non-Caucasian), there is an experience base already present in Raleigh for serving diverse audiences.
- With so many current attendees living outside the 45-minute drive time, providing programs outside of the city center could increase and diversity participation.
- The lack of overlap among the audiences of individual arts organizations highlights the opportunity for coordinated efforts in programming and marketing.
- Audience development is a long-term process. Engaging all of Raleigh's people in arts and cultural activities that have meaning to them will require a sustained effort, experimentation, and organizational learning. While this is clearly a fundamental value and goal of the Raleigh Arts Plan, it is best approached with patience and persistence as a long-term initiative.



Audience Development Suggestions

A number of specific suggestions for audience development were made by arts organizations and other stakeholders during the workshops conducted as part of this research.

- The role of the City of Raleigh can include convening arts organizations for group learning and experimentation, similar to the way in which it convened the arts organizations for this marketing research. The City can also provide seed funding for programming and marketing initiatives.
- Audience development is closely related to the need for a comprehensive arts marketing program. It will be important to provide ready access to information on available offerings and promotional incentives to attend or try new experiences.
- An intriguing suggestion to help encourage seniors and people with disabilities to attend arts events is a “buddies program,” in which people volunteer to bring, meet and/or assist with finding appropriate services and accommodations for patrons.
- Serving all of Raleigh’s people does not have to mean a ticket to a performance. The community and neighborhood strategies recommended in this plan are examples of ways in which some of the less well-served populations in Raleigh may choose to create and participate in cultural programming that they initiate.



American Indian Heritage Celebration (Photo courtesy of NC Museum of History)

Raleigh's Cultural Assets

An inventory of cultural assets was developed for the Raleigh Arts Plan to better understand Raleigh's arts and culture ecosystem. Objectives were to compile a portrait of Raleigh's cultural places and organizations, consider their extent and characteristics, and compare their location to a map of Raleigh's arts demand (see previous section, Raleigh's Market for the Arts). It is important to note that, unlike public safety or public transportation, there are no nationally established standards for the number and type of arts organizations that should be available to a community. Rather, cultural asset inventories are a descriptive tool. They illustrate what a community values and can indicate defining interests in a place, such as the high number of music clubs in Austin, Texas or dance studios in New York City.

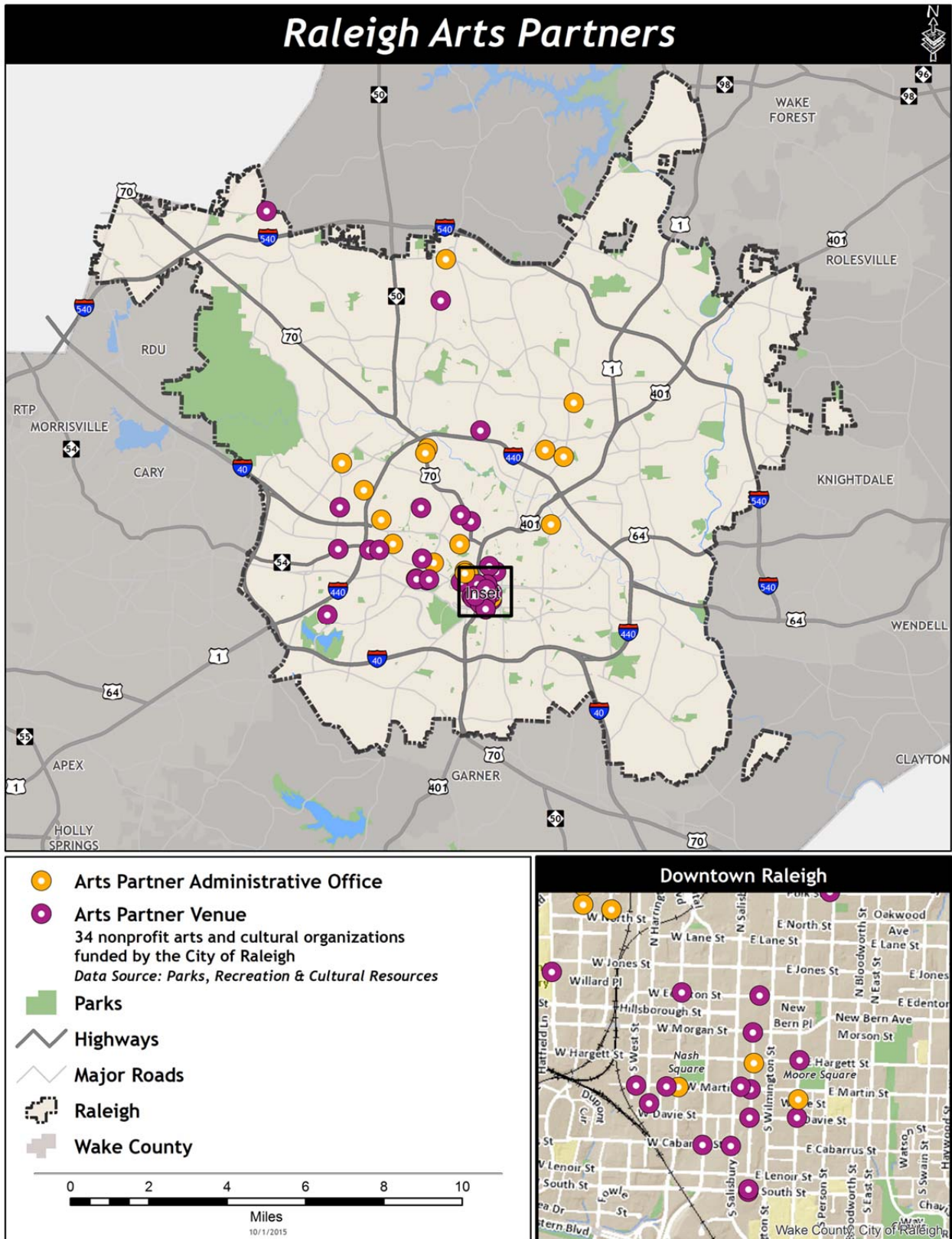
A complete listing of the Raleigh Cultural Asset Inventory will be included in a forthcoming research appendix. Each of the following sub-sections describes a category of cultural asset and, where data is available, a map locating some of the assets.

The Nonprofit Arts Community

A good place to start a cultural inventory is Raleigh's community of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. According to IRS records, in 2013 there were 218 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations located in the City of Raleigh. When organizations that are inactive or very small are excluded from this number, about half remain. They encompass a varied and far-reaching set of cultural interests, from ballet to international friendship to aromatherapy.

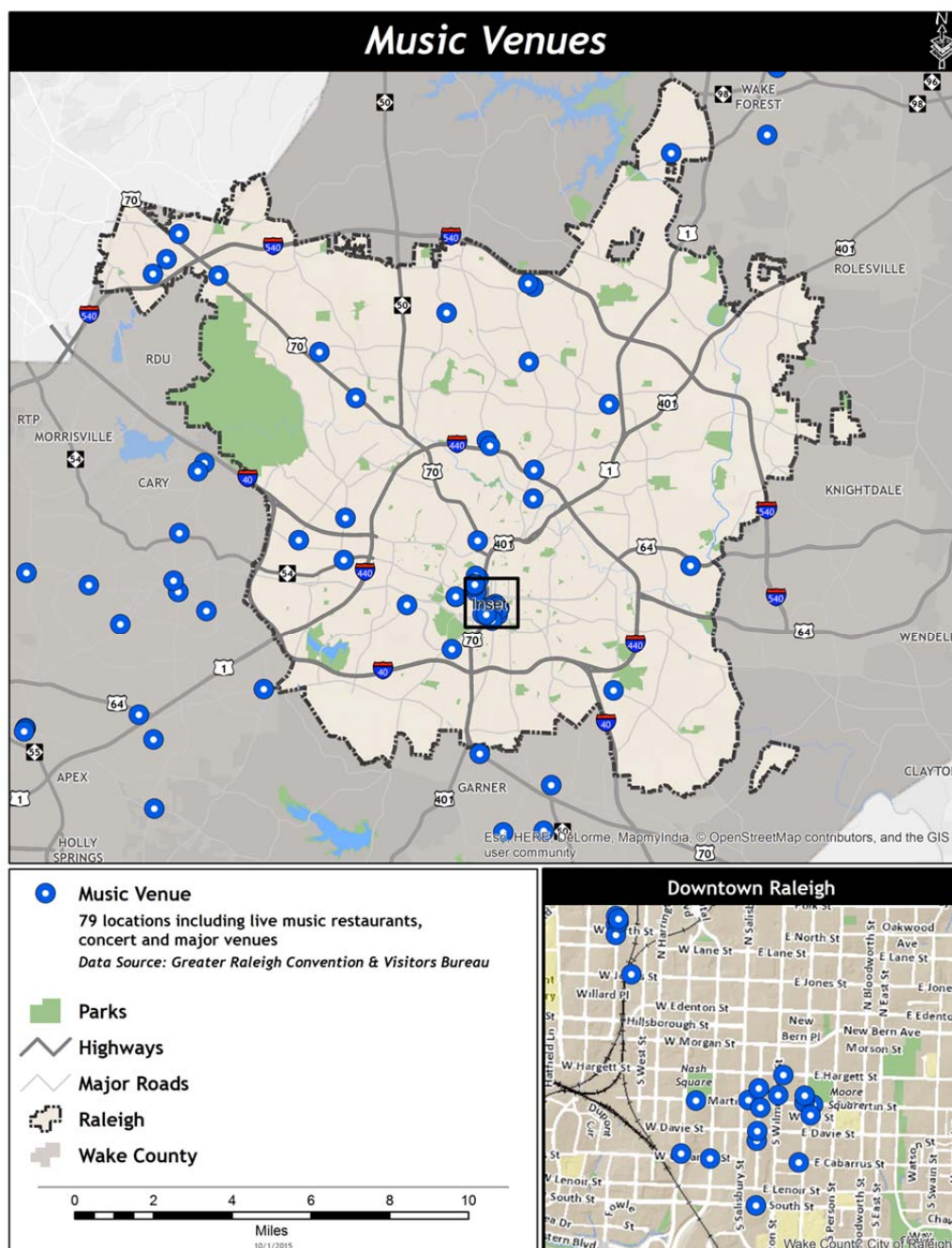
In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, 34 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations received grant funding from the City and are termed Arts Partners. These organizations represent most of Raleigh's major providers of cultural programming. Some of these organizations manage their own performance and exhibition facilities, while many present programs at major cultural facilities owned by the City (like the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts) and elsewhere at venues as diverse as churches, cafes and pubs. This arts community represents a core constituency of the Office of Raleigh Arts and an effective collective instrument to fulfill some of the goals of this plan. For example, audience development goals will rely in part on efforts made by the Arts Partners.

The following map shows the locations of Arts Partner administrative offices and venues (places where programming is provided, such as a theatre, exhibit space or classroom).



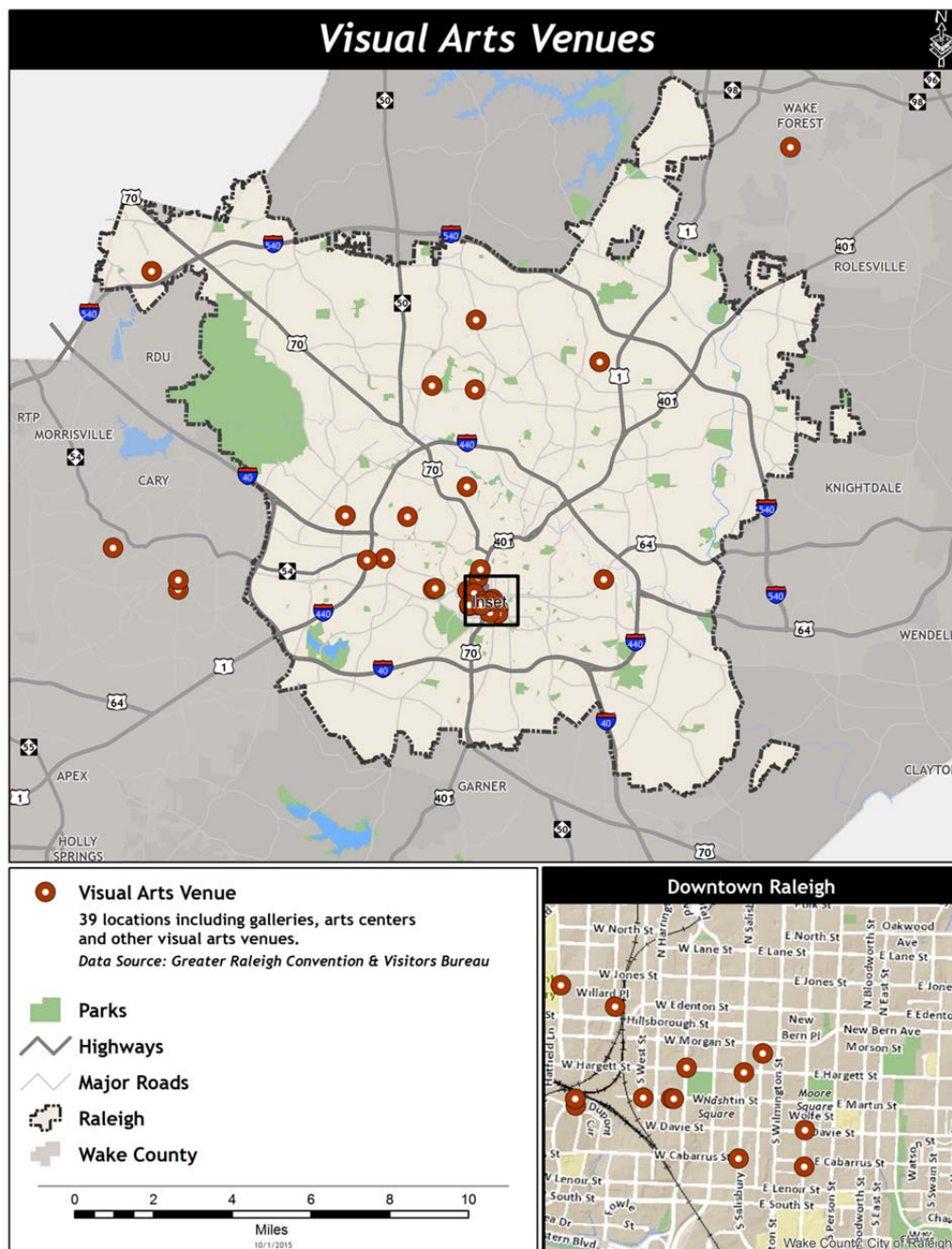
Live Music Venues

Raleigh is home to a vital live music scene. This community of musicians, clubs, small theatres and festival events, which serve a significant audience, comprises a mixture of for-profit businesses, unincorporated musical groups, individual musicians and a few nonprofit music organizations. The music spans a range of styles including acoustic, rock, jazz and pop. The map shows the locations of 52 concert venues, restaurants and pubs that regularly offer live music in Raleigh, with a total of 79 in the Triangle region, identified by the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau.



Visual Arts Venues

Raleigh is also home to a collection of art galleries, artist studios and spaces, museums and other locations that display art. As the map illustrates, visual arts venues are located throughout Wake County. Those located in the City of Raleigh range from the North Carolina Museum of Art to the art gallery in the WakeMed Hospital and include artist-run spaces, university galleries, art schools and arts-related businesses. The City operates the Block Gallery in the Municipal Building, curating and displaying works by artists from the region, as well as displaying art from the Municipal Art Collection in City offices.



Public Art

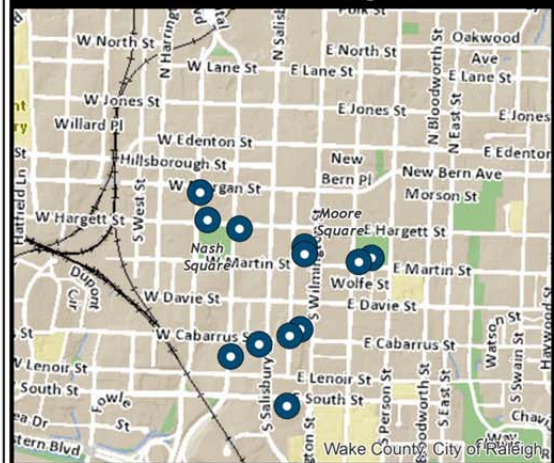
Raleigh is endowed with a range of public art, including pieces of significant historic as well as commemorative importance on the grounds of the State Capitol. Colleges and universities have commissioned public art over the years, with some, like North Carolina State University, continuing to add contemporary work. The State of North Carolina has also enhanced the cityspace with major public art as part of a now-lapsed program. The Museum Park at the North Carolina Museum of Art presents a continuously changing outdoor exhibition of public art that is accessible via the Capital Area Greenway System as well as on foot.

On behalf of the City, the Raleigh Arts Commission initiated a public art program with the commissioning of Dale Eldred's *Light + Time Tower* in the mid-1990s and continued with projects like the Red Wolf Ramble in 2001.

In 2009, the City of Raleigh joined the company of hundreds of other municipalities across the country and established a program to allocate a portion of funds for construction of City projects (one-half percent) for public art.

Most works are located at the municipal facilities whose construction triggered the requirement, such as the Buffalo Road Aquatic Center, Halifax Park and Wilders Grove Solid Waste Services Facility. The City also has a collection of more than 500 artworks by local, North Carolina and national artists accumulated over more than 30 years. The Municipal Art Collection is displayed throughout the City.

The map shows the location of 30 major works commissioned for the Municipal Art Collection. Though many are downtown, there is also a relatively wide dispersion of work throughout the city. It should also be noted that the public art program commissions special projects such as ART-ON-THE-MOVE—artworks displayed on city buses—and other temporary installations. These works clearly help make artwork more publicly accessible and align with the community desire for art in everyday life and in unexpected places.



Off-the-Radar Cultural Assets

Planning participants were asked to identify venues, places and events that they value *and* that are not well known in the community. This “off-the-radar” list was intended specifically to look beyond the cultural facilities, arts organizations, arts centers and other recognized cultural assets. It serves two purposes: first, to identify assets that should be better known and can potentially be included in the implementation of the Raleigh Arts Plan and, second, to provide an alternative picture of what Raleigh considers important to its cultural life.

This canvassing of the public for off-the-radar cultural items yielded a list of 148 places and events. While some were also found on more established lists—United Arts Council and Visual Art Exchange—others were less recognized as cultural venues—Escazu Artisan Chocolates, Scooters Grill and Bar and No Regrets Tattoo. This list suggests that Raleigh’s residents have a broad definition of culture, which amplifies messages communicated by participants throughout the planning process. The list is far-ranging, encompassing churches, bookstores, small book presses, coffee shops, artisanal foods, college and university programs, craft stores, art classes, house concerts, makers’ spaces, pubs and bars, libraries, comedy clubs, dance studios, yoga studios, parks and gardens. When considered alongside the list of Raleigh’s arts organizations, cultural facilities and music clubs, it adds great dimension to the portrait of what residents value in their local cultural lives. The flavor of an artfully made chocolate, moments in a memorial garden, and reading a small book of poetry—each activity suggested by this list illustrates an integration of creativity into the everyday lives and activities of Raleigh’s citizens.

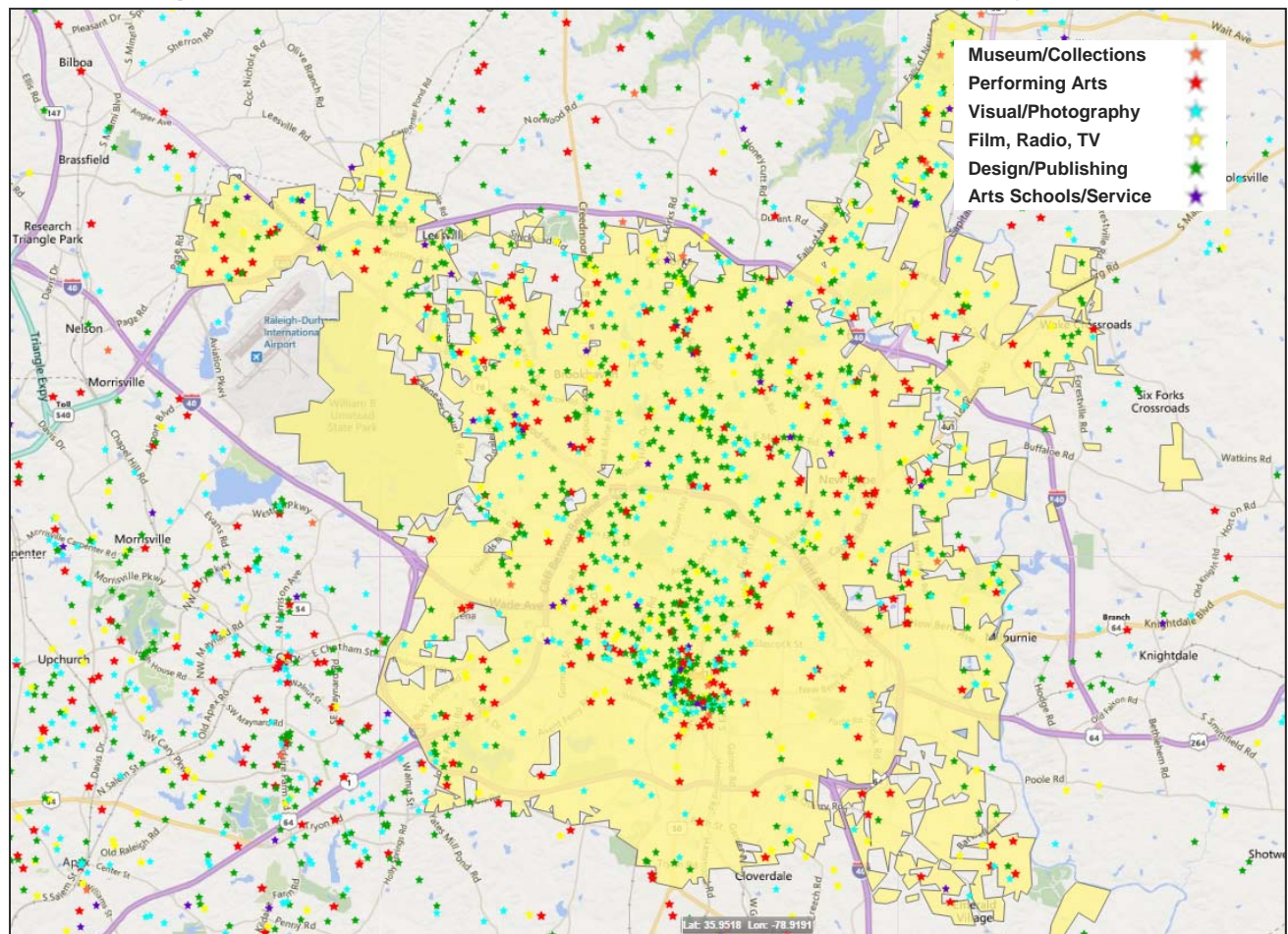
The Creative Industries in Raleigh

An additional way of reviewing Raleigh's cultural assets is to evaluate them as an economic sector. The creative industries sector encompasses both nonprofit and for-profit businesses, including film, architecture and design companies as well as museums, symphonies and artist collectives. This study calculates the number of such creative enterprises in Raleigh as well as their total employment (source: Americans for the Arts, *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts*, 2015).

Raleigh is home to about 1,350 arts-related businesses that employ more than 6,000 people. The creative industries account for 4.8% of the total number of businesses located in Raleigh and 2.0% of the employment. This is above the national averages of 3.9% and 1.9%, respectively.

The map plots the creative industries, with each star representing a unique creative establishment. It is interesting to note that these enterprises are more broadly dispersed in the community than the nonprofits taken alone. This is especially true for the performing arts businesses (red stars).

Raleigh's Creative Industries Include 1,349 Arts-Related Businesses That Employ 6,066 People



A second perspective on Raleigh's creative economy is provided by a 2012 study conducted by Americans for the Arts (source: *Arts & Economic Prosperity IV*). This study measured a range of economic impacts of only the nonprofit arts community and its audiences. These nonprofit measures are essentially a subset of the larger creative industries studied in the Creative Industries report, above. During fiscal year 2010, aggregate nonprofit sector spending by both the City of Raleigh's nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences totaled \$143.5 million. The table below demonstrates the total economic impact of this spending.

TOTAL Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry in the City of Raleigh
(Spending by Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences)

	City of Raleigh	Median of Similar Study Regions Pop. = 250,000 to 499,999	National Median
Direct Expenditures	\$143,482,108	\$78,014,569	\$49,081,279
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	5,699	2,719	1,533
Resident Household Income	\$109,294,000	\$63,166,000	\$35,124,500
Local Government Revenue	\$6,526,000	\$3,640,500	\$1,946,500
State Government Revenue	\$7,532,000	\$4,143,500	\$2,498,000

These numbers show that, even during a recessionary year, Raleigh's nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences have an economic impact that is significantly above comparative regions and national medians. Direct expenditures, employment, household income and government revenues are all substantially higher than their benchmarks.

Conclusions of the Cultural Asset Inventory

The cultural asset inventory shows that Raleigh is a city with an extensive and varied collection of cultural resources. It has numerous organizations, an above-average creative sector of the economy, and a robust collection of municipal assets (cultural facilities, community and arts centers, public art and City art collection). However, to support the demand and offer a diverse portfolio of arts opportunities, the City will need to grow new and different opportunities throughout the community.

The next section explores the issue of geography or location of these assets. However, an overall conclusion of the inventory is that Raleigh is not in the general position of needing to invest in expansion of its arts community. Rather, it is faced with the challenge of leveraging its existing community resources in furtherance of the community's *Creative Life* vision. Making even better use of a strong network of assets is an auspicious challenge.

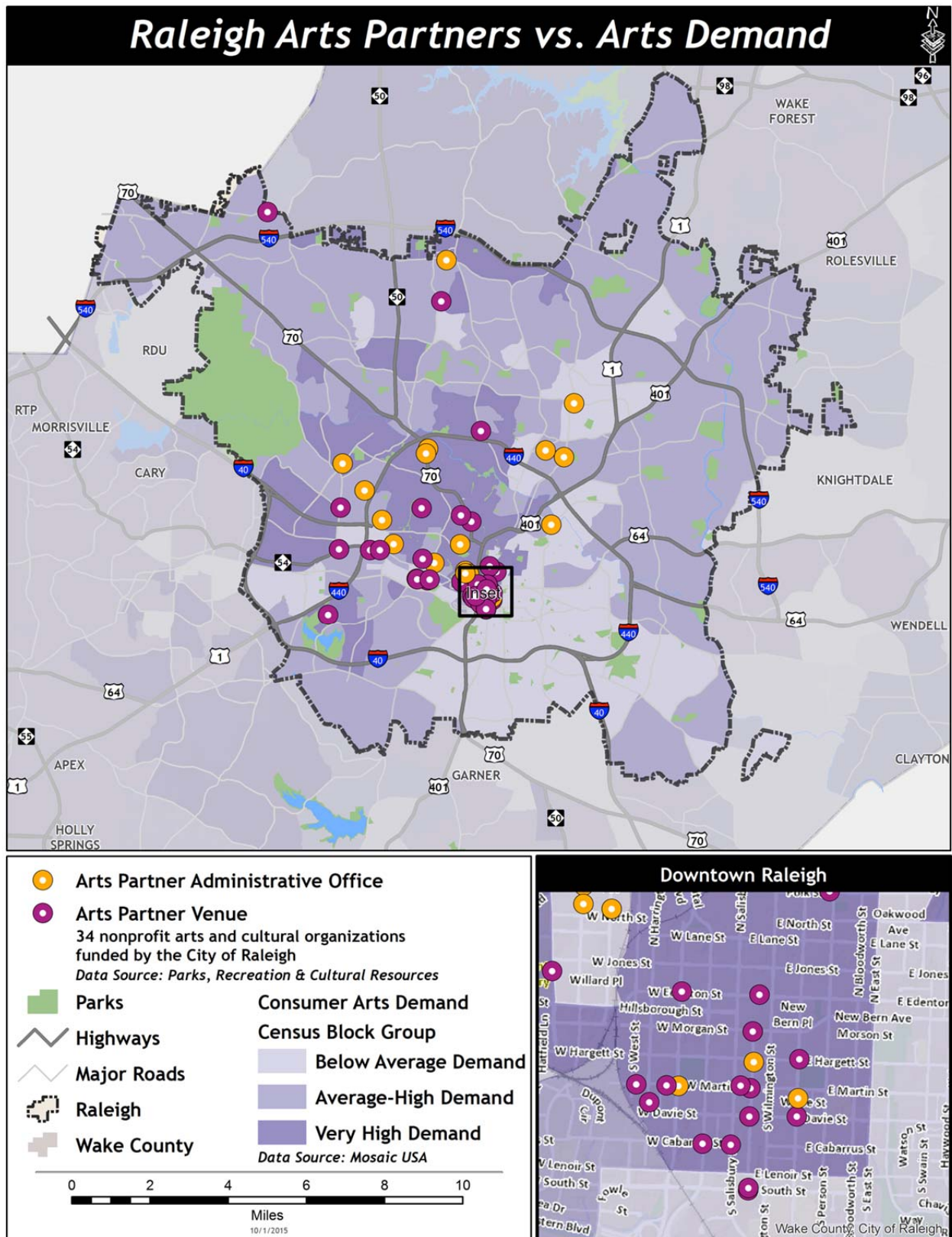
This is not to state categorically that Raleigh does not have needs or gaps in its cultural inventory. The findings list the need for a variety of additional venues and spaces. The public art program has set goals for expansion of its collection to new areas of the city. Also, some cultural leaders commented on the relative absence of organizations rooted in communities of color. Ethnically specific cultural programming appears to be provided now primarily through festivals and smaller or unincorporated organizations. Achieving greater cultural equity will likely require efforts to strengthen and grow organizations of color.

Locating Assets and Audiences

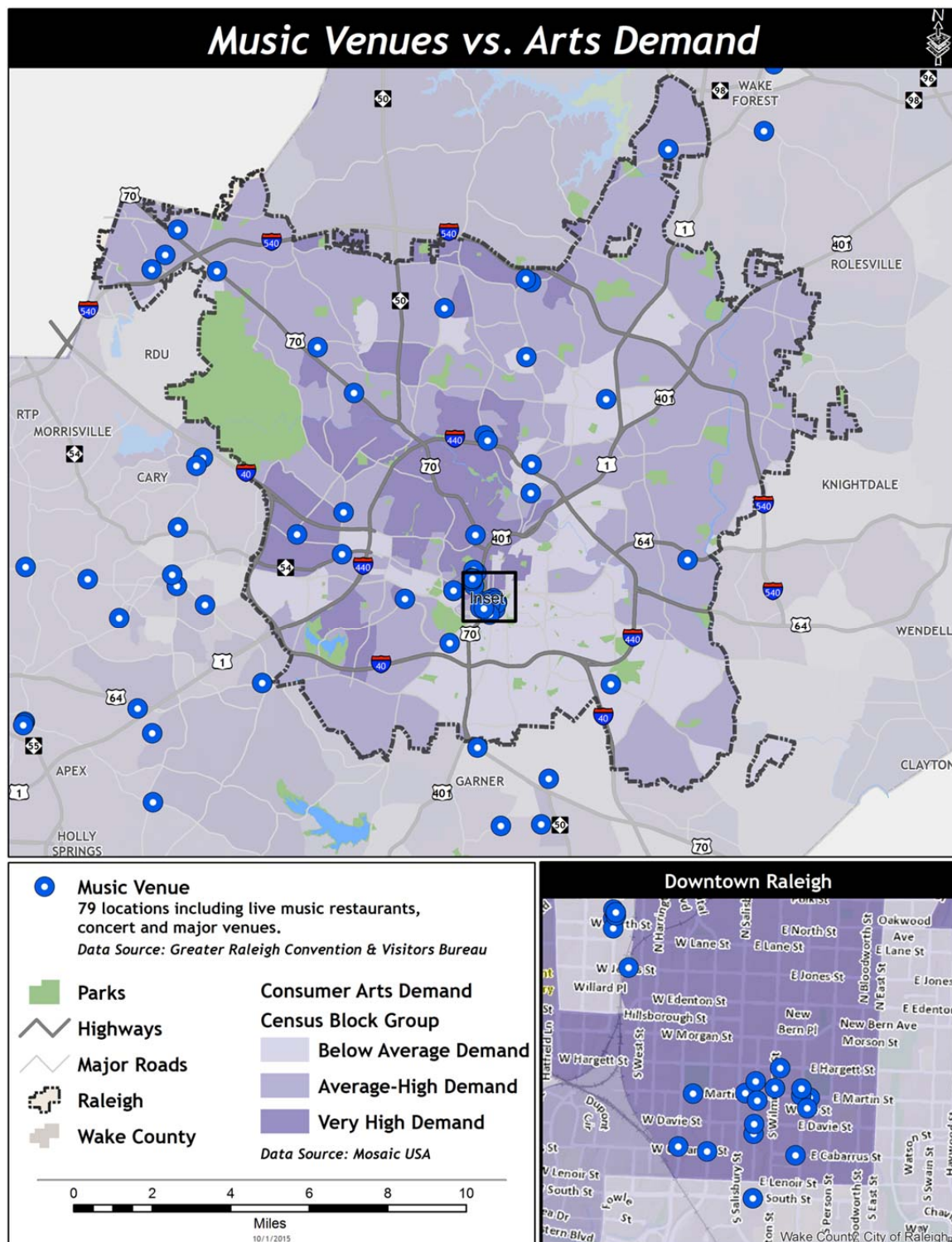
Taken together, the cultural asset inventory and arts market study highlight a challenge for Raleigh's cultural development: Raleigh's cultural facilities, organizations and programs are concentrated in and near downtown. Yet, the arts demand, which is significantly above national averages, is broadly dispersed throughout the entire City of Raleigh and beyond even the 45-minute drive time. Moreover, citizens clearly described the challenges they face with traffic, location and other practical barriers to pursuing their own and their children's creative interests. While residents value the facilities and programs concentrated downtown, fulfillment of their vision of a creative life requires building closer connections between cultural assets and participants.

The areas of lowest arts demand are found dispersed throughout the city and the region, with a concentration in the southeast. These areas of low demand represent, in geographic terms, important targets for efforts to diversify and broaden the arts audience. They also are an opportunity to explore how cultural programming can be created or adapted to suit the needs of people living in neighborhoods generally located farther from the existing infrastructure of facilities and organizations.

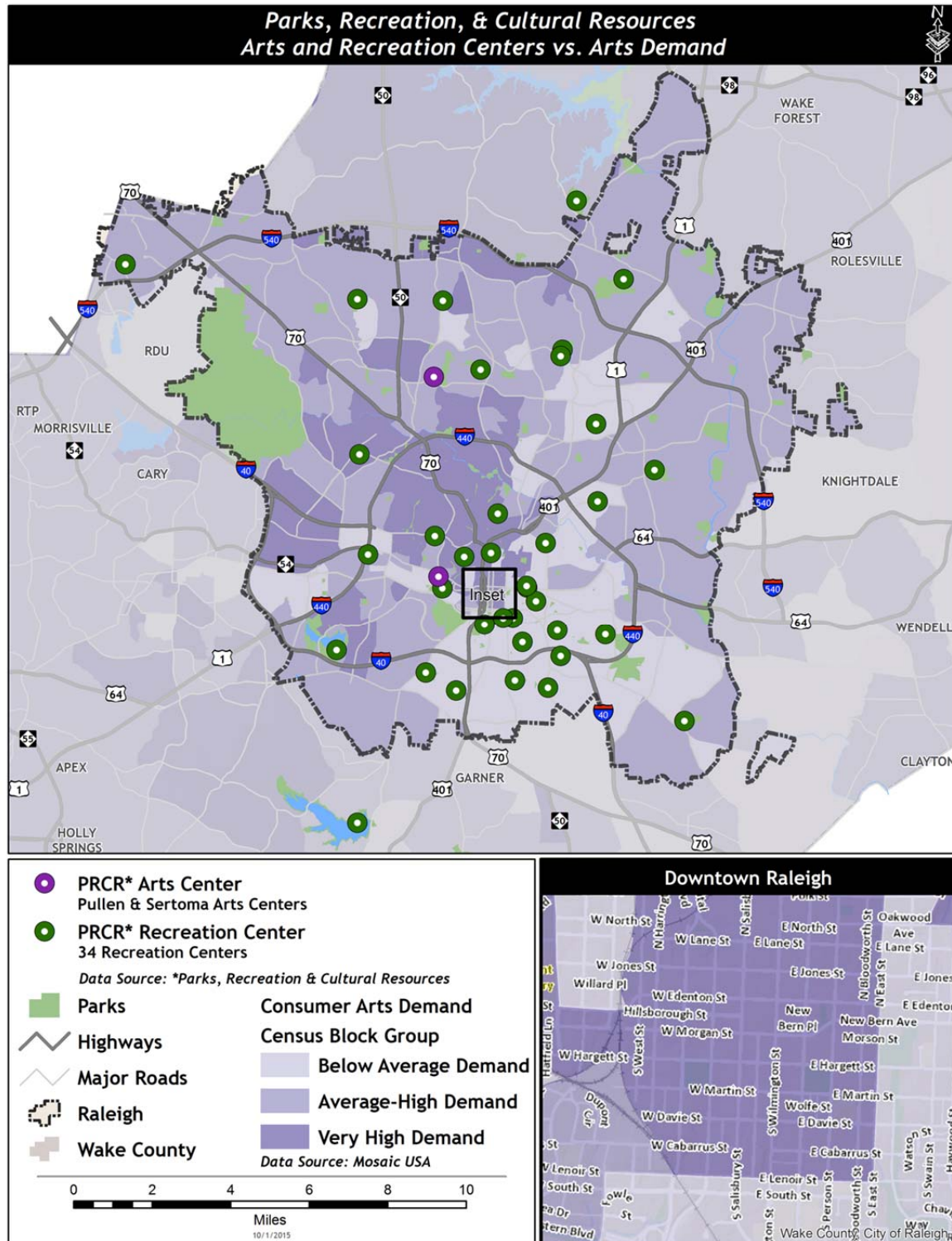
The following two maps overlay the locations of Raleigh Arts Partners and Live Music Venues on the "heat map" of arts demand. These maps illustrate the distance between venues and consumers. The first shows Raleigh Arts Partners concentrated in the center of the map and downtown—most of the cultural facilities are also located downtown—while the areas of average to very high demand are spread throughout the entire city and region except for the southeast. The pins on this map do not indicate all locations where Raleigh Arts Partners provide programming. Many planning participants noted the relative lack of programming offered in southeast Raleigh, north of the I-440 Beltline, and other parts of the city where citizens desire cultural activities closer to home.



The map of music venues shows broader geographic distribution in relation to the demand. This may reflect the fact that most music venues are for-profit businesses and may locate closer to high-demand neighborhoods as a commercial imperative—location and accessibility are key drivers for reaching an audience. Both maps illustrate the fact that lower-demand areas have relatively few cultural assets.



The map of City of Raleigh's many arts and community centers highlights an opportunity. The map shows the facilities broadly distributed throughout Raleigh's many neighborhoods and all areas of arts demand. Some of these facilities (including the well-known Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers) already offer arts programs. Many, if not all, of the others have the potential to provide or support the kind of locally-based neighborhood-oriented programming envisioned in this plan.



Raleigh's *Creative Life* Vision and Plan



ART-ON-THE-MOVE bus art by Amy Sawyer

Raleigh's *Creative Life* Plan

The *Creative Life* Vision

What does success look like for Raleigh's cultural future? The community's collective vision for its life in the coming decade is:

Raleigh is a community connected through arts and culture, where every person is empowered to lead the creative life they envision.

This vision is highly inclusive. For some people, this vision means subscribing to the Symphony; for others, learning to play the guitar. For artists, it means having public acknowledgement, resources and forums for their work. For children and youth, it means full opportunities to learn and develop their abilities.

This vision also distinguishes Raleigh from nearly all other cities. It is rare for a community to focus so directly on the creative interests of all citizens. Prioritizing the public value of arts and culture helps engage more people in the creative life of the community and continue the evolution of an authentic identity for Raleigh.



ArtSPARK artist at SPARKcon

Overview of the Plan

Raleigh's *Creative Life* Plan is a community plan shaped by extensive community engagement, and many of its recommendations are based on suggestions made by community members. There were ample and productive forums for dialogue and more than 4,000 people participated. Community members participated in leadership for the planning process and led more than 75 community conversations (informal, peer-to-peer discussion groups in community settings). Consultants facilitated focus groups of stakeholders, community leader interviews, and a town hall meeting. A community survey was conducted in three forms: a statistically valid version, an open access web-based version, and an intercept version deployed at festivals and community events. The website, www.RaleighArtsPlan.com, provided access to citizens who preferred to participate online.

Community engagement and research can be distilled or organized into eight major goals. These goals are described on the following pages and each is accompanied by strategies in support of their fulfillment.

Creative Life Plan Goals

Goal 1. Promote an Active Arts and Culture Life Throughout the Community

Goal 2. Expand Youth Arts Participation

Goal 3. Ensure Equity, Access and Inclusion in All Cultural Programming

Goal 4. Support the Work of Raleigh's Artists and Arts Organizations

Goal 5. Enhance and Revitalize Raleigh's Neighborhoods and Districts Through Thoughtful Placemaking

Goal 6. Enhance Arts Leadership and Governance

Goal 7. Strengthen Marketing, Promotion and Valuing of the Arts

Goal 8. Create a System of Sustainable Arts Funding

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1. Promote an Active Arts and Culture Life Throughout the Community

Raleigh strongly values its sense of community. Planning participants often observed that Raleigh has an unusually open culture, with less hierarchy than other communities. Newcomers comment that they can participate readily in civic life. Some attribute this to the fact that the city is the state capital and the home of universities and colleges. Raleigh has a well-educated, stable, middle-class population of state and university employees, with a shared sense of community and civic engagement.

This open culture is reflected in Raleigh's long involvement with community arts. Amateur as well as professional arts are valued and celebrated. Raleigh Little Theatre is one of the nation's oldest community theatres. The City's Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers are another expression of Raleigh's commitment to avocational arts. Citizens have high rates of personal participation in creative activities and articulated a desire for more opportunities for personal creative expression. They also seek to integrate arts and culture into neighborhoods and the experience of everyday life. This desire could be met through a program that enables community members and community groups to propose projects for their neighborhoods that would receive modest support from the City. This aligns with a national trend in which community members seek a richness of daily experience that includes surprise, creativity, participation and spontaneity.

Artists and other creative professionals participated in large numbers in development of this plan. They expressed a strong desire to be engaged in and co-create the city's cultural future, and not merely be the passive recipients of public support for artists. Their artworks often involve direct engagement with the community.

An inventory of cultural assets in Raleigh illustrates that most venues are located downtown and are often located far from the homes of current and potential participants. Facilitating citizens' creative lives calls for more decentralized distribution of venues. It will also mean enabling citizens and artists to initiate their own ideas for creative activities, in ways and places they choose to be the most relevant and impactful. The overall notion of facilitating the full range of the community's creative expression and allowing the community to shape the cultural life of the city is a central element of the *Creative Life Plan*. It is also a visionary leadership role for the City and the Office of Raleigh Arts to assume.

Culture in Community Strategies

- 1.1. Develop a Community-Initiated Projects program by inviting proposals for grassroots arts or cultural projects from individual artists, individual community members and/or unincorporated groups. Create a funding category that provides modest grants to contribute to the cost of these projects.
- 1.2. Develop a Community Arts Training Program for artists and other community members to develop their capacity to utilize the arts in community settings, to support cross-sector uses of the arts, and to foster a network of individuals engaged in community-based arts.
- 1.3. Expand arts programming in neighborhoods by developing a juried catalogue of artists and groups qualified to provide arts programming in neighborhood settings, and promote their use in Community-Initiated Projects.
- 1.4. Create a Neighborhood Artist Laureate program, appointing artists to serve as artist/leaders in the neighborhood where they live and to carry out arts projects or activities designed to enhance or celebrate that neighborhood.
- 1.5. Expand programming in community centers by developing small-scale arts and cultural activities offered at or through community centers, responding to local needs and interests. Provide staff training to support and facilitate these activities.
- 1.6. Expand programming at Pullen and Sertoma Arts Centers by developing an expanded curriculum based on identified needs, and allow these to inform facility planning and enhancements. This would include enhanced Center staff training and tools to support program expansion.
- 1.7. Evaluate the fee structure of City arts classes, including the scholarship program, to ensure that cost does not present a barrier to citizen participation.
- 1.8. Promote production and visibility of showcases for avocational artistry such as community theatres, orchestras, and student exhibitions, choral competitions and sound-off spots.
- 1.9. Promote Millennial-led projects through the Community-Initiated Projects program.
- 1.10. Create a biannual Citywide Celebration of Neighborhoods, inviting participation by all neighborhoods and promoting their applications through the Community-Initiated Projects program.
- 1.11. Explore development of a self-curated citywide Raleigh Fringe Festival, where arts organizations, arts businesses, artists, community groups and others (e.g., restaurants, farmers markets, design firms) self-produce events throughout the community during a defined festival time period, marketed under the festival brand and perhaps linked by an annual theme. Encourage community groups to develop neighborhood events as part of the festival.

Goal 2. Expand Youth Arts Participation

Raleigh's children and youth are as arts-involved as adults. More than three-quarters of surveyed families report that their children participate in arts activities in school or outside of school in community settings (e.g., with private providers, at arts centers). One third of all residents desire more arts and cultural events and activities for children and teens and believe the City should support arts and cultural programs for youth after school and during the summer. This could be accomplished by working with Raleigh arts organizations to take arts education programming into community centers in low-income neighborhoods or "arts deserts" within the city. Additionally, the Office of Raleigh Arts could develop an artist residency program for individual artists and arts groups, to be located in community centers. Acceptance into a residency program could be contingent upon allowing community members to observe work in progress (such as dance rehearsals), providing mentorship or learning opportunities for youth/teens during the residency, or providing learning opportunities for community members. In community conversations, interviews, discussion groups and the town hall meeting, participants discussed their belief in the value of arts as a part of a child's education and development. Schools in Wake County are recognized for strong arts education programming. Still, planning participants observed that arts education is not equally available to all students and that there are gaps in available arts experiences. Arts educators reported barriers to successful arts instruction, even when it is available (e.g., competing priorities for students' time, lack of parental support). And arts organizations report the need for funding, coordination and advocacy to support their education programs.

Youth Arts Strategies

- 2.1. Develop a Universal Arts Exposure for Students program, partnering with Wake County Public School System and other stakeholders, to provide universal, sequential access by all Raleigh students (K-12) to arts experiences through educational performances, museum visits and other field trips.
- 2.2. Develop a citywide Youth Arts Pass program that provides free, citywide access to arts organizations and arts learning experiences for high school students.
- 2.3. Develop a Teaching Artists in Community Settings program, including certification for teaching artists, to provide learning opportunities in the community. This program could be operated by the City or in private community settings such as Boys & Girls Clubs, church centers, YMCAs and YWCAs.
- 2.4. Create a Youth Arts Residency Program in community centers, where artists and arts groups work directly with youth who are enrolled in the program.
- 2.5. Youth Arts Leadership Program: Identify and develop arts leadership opportunities for youth in collaboration with the Raleigh Youth Council.

Goal 3. Ensure Equity, Access and Inclusion in All Cultural Programming

Raleigh's communities include people of differing ethnicities, heritages, generations, places of origin and abilities, and Raleigh is experiencing ongoing changes in this multiplicity of cultures. Many planning participants believe this is one of Raleigh's strengths, and embrace the attendant invigoration of new and culturally different arts experiences. Citizens also discussed their strong sense of heritage and culture as tradition. They view their traditions as sources of inspiration, causes for celebration and ways to meet the challenges of living. Raleigh's cultural calendar includes culturally-specific festivals and celebrations ranging from the African American Cultural Festival to the North Carolina Pride Parade and Festival.

Promoting cultural equity is an overarching value embodied in this plan. This value certainly includes consideration of cultural bias and its continuing impact in the cultural sector. Equity also involves understanding and meeting the cultural interests of all cultural groups, including communities of color, immigrants, the LGBT community, low-income people and people with disabilities. It is this larger goal that best captures the vision of the *Creative Life* Plan to enable the creative expression of all citizens.

The City of Raleigh has an ongoing commitment to the goal of ensuring equity, access and inclusion. For example, its Human Relations Commission advises City Council on human services and rights and has a mission to promote human dignity, equal opportunity and harmony. This commitment is reinforced in the "Economic Prosperity and Equity" Vision Theme in the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

The distribution of Raleigh's cultural resources reflects cultural values that are not always in alignment with the vision of this plan. Many observe that the arts audience does not reflect Raleigh's overall population. There are relatively few culturally-specific arts organizations. And the majority of arts funding goes to mainstream arts organizations. One of the goals of the *Creative Life* Plan is to better serve the cultural interests of all citizens, so there is a clear opportunity to shape policies that will welcome new audiences to the arts as well as focus resources on the cultural expressions of all populations.

Cultural equity also implies inclusion in, and equitable access to, cultural programming. Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate. The term "inclusion" is used by disability rights activists to promote the idea that all people should be freely and openly accommodated without restrictions or limitations of any kind. Inclusion is exemplified by the concept of universal design. Design pioneer Ron Mace coined the term "universal design" to describe the concept of designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability or status in life. To fully realize the goal of

ensuring that every resident can fully enjoy a creative life, barriers to participation must fall, be they physical, financial or attitudinal.

Equity, Access and Inclusion Strategies

- 3.1. Develop a New Audiences Program with the goal to assist arts organizations to diversify their audiences through efforts such as coordinated capacity building, audience research, collaboration and cross-promotion. The New Audiences Program can be an evolution of the current Innovation Grants category.
- 3.2. Create a Universal Arts Access Program by expanding and developing the current Arts Learning Community for ADA Inclusion to more organizations, with the intention that Raleigh becomes a national model for arts access and inclusion of people with disabilities.
- 3.3. Develop a cultural equity policy for the City and provide cultural equity training for the Office of Raleigh Arts, Arts Commissioners and members of the Public Art and Design Board.
- 3.4. Explore use of emerging technologies to enhance ADA accessibility, such as remote access to museums.
- 3.5. Develop a program to build the capacity of culturally-specific organizations and programming throughout the City.
- 3.6. Build the capacity of the Office of Raleigh Arts so that it may serve as a role model for best practices in the area of cultural equity.



Goal 4. Support the Work of Raleigh's Artists and Arts Organizations

At the core of all arts and cultural activities are the generative artists themselves. No art happens without the painters and sculptors, the writers, the playwrights and actors, the choreographers and dancers, and the composers and musicians who create and interpret the art and, in turn, inspire creativity throughout the community. Strong support for artists by the City and the community are essential for Raleigh's artistic ecosystem.

Beyond funding, in order to create their work artists need time to devote to their craft, appropriate spaces to create and exhibit their work, to rehearse and perform, and they need business skills to manage their enterprises and to market their work.

In Raleigh, like many cities, space for the creation of art is an issue. Affordable live-work and studio space and rehearsal, performance and exhibition space become harder to find as the cost of real estate rises. The space challenges of artists are exacerbated by the inevitable infill and redevelopment of a community. Raleigh has begun to feel these pressures as the population continues to grow, thereby reducing the ability to maintain affordable space for artists to work, practice, perform and live.

The City of Raleigh can be instrumental in addressing this problem by developing rehearsal, performance and exhibition spaces. Where appropriate, the City can initiate partnerships with private developers and nonprofits to construct facilities in areas targeted for redevelopment or new construction. The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) can be used to encourage development of artist live-work, rehearsal and performance spaces. The Office of Raleigh Arts can play a critical role marshalling resources to understand the artists' space needs and maintaining an information database about potential spaces available for use by artists.

Another need that has been articulated by the artist groups is professional development services. Artists are, after all, small businesses, operating to generate a profit from their creative activities. Unfortunately, many artists have not acquired the skills and experience needed to be successful as small businesses. The Office of Raleigh Arts can provide artists with the technical assistance and professional practices development they require. The agency can provide these services directly, or in partnership with local arts agencies, or by providing funding.

While artists need support from the City, they also have much to offer. Artists bring unique perspectives, not just to their art-making but to all manner of problems and challenges. Some cities have taken advantage of these special abilities that artists bring by embedding artists into the work of the city. This can take the form of encouraging artists to seek appointment to city boards, committees and commissions as well as special-purpose task forces. It can take the form of hiring artists to do small-scale design work for city projects.

Several cities have developed a roster of artists available to work with city departments to elevate the aesthetics of infrastructure projects. In most such cases, the artist does not actually design and create a project, but provides advice on design issues.

Artists and Arts Organizations Support Strategies

- 4.1. Make enhancements to the Office of Raleigh Arts' Arts Grants:
 - 4.1.1. Increase the per capita allocation of funds to Arts Grants.
 - 4.1.2. Increase funding for organizational capacity-building projects.
- 4.2. Develop a "Space Grants" program of in-kind use of venues and spaces, working with private sector funders and partners.
- 4.3. Develop an ongoing program of professional development workshops for artists.
- 4.4. Use the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to encourage artist live-work, studio, rehearsal and performance spaces.
- 4.5. Encourage developers requesting zoning exceptions to include public art and/or artist live-work and studio spaces to meet alternative requirements.
- 4.6. Establish a program of fellowships and/or mentorships that recognizes the most talented and creative artists in Raleigh, providing funding and recognition.
- 4.7. Connect Raleigh artists with opportunities to serve in civic leadership roles through appointment to City boards, committees and commissions.
- 4.8. Create an Innovation Grant Fund to increase available "risk capital" to support artistic experimentation and innovation.
- 4.9. Explore policy changes for the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts that would reduce the priority for revenue generation and expand its presenting program to focus on meeting a broader range of Raleigh's audience interests; provide a "risk capital" fund to support such presenting.
- 4.10. Convene staff of arts organizations, bringing together staff with similar professional responsibilities—artistic directors, executive directors, marketing and education staff—to identify issues of common concern and pursue collective solutions.

Goal 5. Enhance and Revitalize Raleigh's Neighborhoods and Districts Through Thoughtful Placemaking

Place enhancement, often referred to as placemaking, approaches a community, a neighborhood or a specific location in a holistic manner, identifying existing assets and imagining new possibilities. Raleigh has a number of neighborhoods and districts where opportunities abound to creatively celebrate the rich, vibrant history and culture already in place.

Successful creative placemaking brings together three planning activities that are often pursued independently but possess great transformational capacity if employed in unison: community development, cultural development and economic development. All successful placemaking efforts share certain goals in common:

- Nurture and sustain partnerships among key organizations and individuals in the community.
- Recognize and build upon the unique characteristics of their community and its physical, social, cultural and economic circumstances.
- Recognize that there exists a wellspring of creative potential in every community that will impart a quality of authenticity to the transformed place.
- Encourage deep citizen participation, with the goal that the placemaking effort will accurately reflect the community's needs, values and aspirations.
- Promote collaboration among government, the local cultural sector and business organizations to identify areas of mutual interest and benefit.
- Amplify planning and development undertakings by combining local public and private sector resources.
- Preserve the important historical and cultural qualities and develop strategies to protect against runaway gentrification by enacting thoughtful affordable housing policies.
- Mobilize citizen support and political will toward a community consensus on specific courses of action.

There are significant placemaking opportunities in Raleigh that should be developed. Perhaps the most significant opportunity is represented by the City's acquisition of the Dorothea Dix property. Not only does it have buildings appropriate to repurpose as cultural facilities, but the property itself could be developed as an outdoor arts park, including both permanently-sited artworks as well as temporary installations. Other important opportunities include the development of new arts and cultural districts around the city, utilization of vacant storefronts, and street activation by artists in vibrant areas of the city and in downtown.

Cultural Facilities

The community engagement process revealed that Raleigh residents strongly desire cultural activities and programs that are located close to where they live. There are several reasons for this desire, including the need for family- and youth-oriented programs that are easily accessible and the wish for programs that overcome some common barriers to arts participation—cost, availability of time, and transportation. This plan addresses these concerns by directing arts and cultural programs and services into the neighborhoods through the use of community centers. It also recommends the creation of a directory of venues and spaces throughout the city, making it easier for artists and cultural organizations to find places for their programming. Also, the City can play a role in the development of arts production facilities in all artistic disciplines.

Need has been expressed for a 1,500- to 1,800-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Creating a new performing arts theatre and other needed venues are long-term propositions, involving considerable planning to confirm the need and substantial costs. However, the development of new facilities would create a developmental path for Raleigh arts organizations to grow artistically and increase participation. New venues should also follow the principles of universal design to ensure accessibility by all.

Public Art

In 2009, the City adopted a percent-for-art ordinance that allocates 0.5% of certain City capital improvement project budgets for public art. Many quality artworks have been commissioned since then. However, the current program has several limitations. To begin with, the 0.5% allocation does not generate enough money to develop public art projects that are commensurate in scale with the associated capital project. Often, the art projects seem like small-scale add-ons. At the same time, the size of the allocation is not sufficient to build a budget adequate to commission a major signature artwork that could become an iconic representation of Raleigh, in the same way that the St. Louis Gateway Arch has become. It should be noted that some cities have recently adopted new or revised public art ordinances that provide up to 2% for public art. These municipalities include Charlotte, Broward County, FL, Dallas, San Diego and San Jose. The City might consider increasing the public art allocation incrementally.

Similarly, many cities have begun to extend the public art requirement to new private development of commercial, industrial, mixed-use and multi-unit residential projects. This trend recognizes that much of the built environment in a city is created by the private sector that depends upon the publically-financed infrastructure of a city—streets, utility systems, parks, even schools—for successful development. Finally, including public art in private development elevates the quality of urban design and helps to create what are called “complete streets.” In many cases, these ordinances include an “in-lieu” option that allows the

developer to make a monetary contribution in lieu of public art onsite. This fund allows the city to create a fund to commission large-scale public art projects.

The citizens of Raleigh expressed a strong desire for the public art to be more geographically distributed throughout the city. The city's parks and extensive and well-used greenway system offer excellent opportunities to spread the public art throughout the city's neighborhoods.

The City should consider the creation of a public art master plan to guide the development of the program over time. Areas that are typically considered in the creation of a public art master plan include:

- Updating the City's percent-for-art ordinance to broaden the types of capital projects covered by the ordinance, and increasing the percentage allocation.
- Themes or approaches to public art
- Creation of art parks or districts
- Incentives for public art in private development
- Geographic distribution of public art around the city
- Creation of a temporary public art program
- Creation of an "on-call" artist program to work with various City departments
- Strategies to develop sufficient funding to commission major iconic artworks
- Professional development for artists wishing to participate in public art
- Reexamination of program policies and guidelines
- Establishing procedure for donations of artwork
- Assessment of the existing collection, including its physical condition
- Appropriateness of siting and retention in the collection

Placemaking Strategies

Revitalizing Neighborhoods and Districts

- 5.1. In the long-range planning for the Dorothea Dix property, explore the opportunities for future arts venues and cultural programming.

- 5.2. Encourage informal placemaking and short-term arts events and programs arising from the community.
- 5.3. Encourage the formation of arts or creative districts, building on and promoting concentrations of arts facilities, creative businesses, activities and events.
- 5.4. Utilize empty storefronts and other vacant commercial spaces for temporary arts venues such as pop-up galleries.
- 5.5. Encourage street activation by artists.

Cultural Facilities

- 5.6. Develop an online, regional inventory of available venues and spaces.
- 5.7. Encourage creation of smaller indoor and outdoor cultural venues throughout the city, including dance, theatre and music venues, exhibit spaces and gathering spaces for amateur and avocational artists, all of which might be developed as part of larger shared facilities like community centers.
- 5.8. Develop shared facilities that are universally accessible for art production and performances for the various artistic disciplines such as music, dance, theatre and media.
- 5.9. As a long-term goal, explore the development of a 1,500- to 1,800-seat performance space that is universally accessible.

Public Art

- 5.10. Develop a public art master plan to determine future directions for art in public places, including an assessment of the existing program and collection.
- 5.11. Amend the existing ordinance to incrementally increase the allocation for public art in City Capital Improvement Plan projects from 0.5% to 2% to allow for appropriately-scaled projects and for program support, and broaden the types of capital projects receiving public art treatment.
- 5.12. Explore incentives to encourage the inclusion of public art in private development.
- 5.13. Work toward a broader geographic distribution of public art throughout Raleigh's neighborhoods.
- 5.14. Focus on commissioning one or more bold, iconic works in Raleigh.
- 5.15. Utilize the City's Capital Area Greenway system as a venue for placement of public art as identified in the Capital Area Greenway Planning and Design Guide.
- 5.16. Explore opportunities to consider broader bond fund language to ensure that there are flexible funding mechanisms for public art.

Goal 6. Enhance Arts Leadership and Governance

This cultural plan lays out a bold agenda for the development of arts and culture for Raleigh. One corollary to such a dynamic plan is the need to develop new leadership and organizational roles. The arts functions in the City are currently somewhat dispersed and would be strengthened if these functions were combined with the Office of Raleigh Arts into a cultural resources unit. Because the arts have a role to play in support of many City programs, there is a need for greater cross-departmental coordination. In addition, successful implementation of this arts plan will require collaborative policy and program guidance from the Arts Commission, Public Art and Design Board and community stakeholders convened regularly to monitor progress, advise staff, convene an annual town hall meeting and report annually on accomplishments.

Leadership and Governance Strategies

- 6.1. Consider consolidating all City arts functions and activities into a cultural resources administrative unit.
- 6.2. Charge the Arts Commission and the Public Art and Design Board to jointly monitor, advise and report annually on implementation of the Raleigh Arts Plan.
- 6.3. Include the Office of Raleigh Arts in the City's economic development, plan enhancement and related discussions.
- 6.4. Convene arts organization board members on a regular basis to identify issues of common concern and pursue collective solutions.

Goal 7. Strengthen Marketing, Promotion and Valuing of the Arts

Residents of Raleigh repeatedly expressed the desire for better access to information about arts and cultural offerings in the community. Perhaps because of the multitude of events and activities throughout the city, residents have difficulty consistently locating things that interest them and miss opportunities that have passed because they were not aware of them. This is a challenge throughout the country—to overcome the “noise” of many competing marketing messages in people’s lives.

The largest barrier to participation is that people do not know what is available. If arts and culture are a meeting ground for different populations, a recognizable and trusted source of information is needed to connect those populations. The most frequent ways Raleigh’s citizens learn about events that interest them is by word of mouth, social media and direct communication from an organization. Yet these channels provide less opportunity to learn about things outside the immediate networks of each person. Communications must be designed not only to reach the consumer but also to offer and incentivize new experiences.

There are multiple sources of arts information available in Raleigh. The most comprehensive calendar is visitraleigh.com, the event site of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (GRCVB). While the overall site is focused primarily on the interests of the visitor, the arts calendar—a partnership with the GRCVB, Classical Voice of North Carolina, the Office of Raleigh Arts and the United Arts Council—is also intended as an information resource for residents. Additional event marketing websites are maintained by Downtown Raleigh Alliance, the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts and individual arts organizations and venues. Newer online models include ArtsNow (artsnownc.com, affiliated with *The News and Observer*), which utilizes a blog format to feature interviews and commentaries with a greater social media presence, and the www.themostnc.com (managed by the GRCVB) focused on Raleigh’s music scene. The fact that these resources are perceived as not collectively effective demonstrates the point that online information alone, passively available to the consumer, is not sufficient.

There is strong support for a comprehensive online arts resource that is a one-stop-shop for the range of Raleigh’s cultural interests: arts and cultural events, workshops, classes, volunteer and internship opportunities, job openings and other opportunities. Further, the website should facilitate feedback (user reviews) like those of online retailers, to empower the voices and participation of the community. A comprehensive web portal is clearly needed but there is also a desire for greater connectedness, which requires more effective and shared communications systems. Raleigh clearly needs a comprehensive marketing program to connect its residents, workers and visitors with their cultural interests and with each other. This would have the added benefit of strengthening the organizations and businesses providing events

and activities. Many other cities have addressed this challenge. The most successful programs include several essential elements:

- A comprehensive arts and event marketing website partnering with existing arts calendars that may serve as the event database for local/regional newspapers as well as tourism and visitors bureaus. The platform should extend beyond advertising ticketed arts events and take a broad view of “arts and culture,” extending to commercial, community, educational, amateur and even sports activities as well as provide listings for space rentals.
- A mobile application and robust social media to accompany the online listings and to connect people with others sharing like interests.
- Advertising weekly promotions to subscribers for upcoming events and discounted tickets.
- Cross-promotions, such as restaurant tie-ins, ticket samplers, discounts and contests.
- Curate-your-own-season packages, where a purchaser can flexibly choose among the season offerings of a group of organizations.
- Earned revenue services, such as a box office service, advertising program and other fee-based services to help fund the marketing program over time.

In addition to the need for better arts marketing and promotion, planning participants also seek to make arts and culture a more prominent part of Raleigh’s identity and brand. The perception is that arts and culture are seen as an amenity or add-on, not as a reason to visit the city. The Raleigh Arts Plan presents an opportunity to develop the city’s identity to include the community’s vision of “Creative Life.” The vision provides an excellent platform for development of both marketing materials and “product” (programs, events and activities) that can be promoted to visitors and residents alike.

It must also be noted that, while Raleigh is a community with a rich cultural life and a long history of the arts, there remains a need to promote greater public understanding of the role and value of arts and culture in the life of the city, from education of its children, to civic cohesion, to cultural tourism. Advocacy and public awareness are an ongoing challenge, one that can and should be embraced by supporters of this plan.

Marketing, Promotion and Valuing Strategies

- 7.1. Convene a task force of stakeholders to develop a comprehensive, communitywide arts and cultural marketing website and program, building on the efforts of current resources.
- 7.2. Develop a collaborative of arts and cultural organizations and community stakeholders, building on the marketing research conducted for this plan involving Raleigh Arts Partners, to build new audiences,

cross-promote programs and continue joint research efforts. Consider expanding the collaborative to include arts organizations from the Triangle region.

- 7.3. Explore ways to enhance the arts and cultural identity within Raleigh's overall brand.
- 7.4. Create a volunteer city arts "concierge" service to help residents and visitors learn about and participate in local arts and cultural programs and activities.
- 7.5. Develop an advocacy and public education program focused on Raleigh, coordinating with the efforts of Arts North Carolina and the United Arts Council.



Burning Coal Theatre Company, *Much Ado About Nothing*

Goal 8. Create a System of Sustainable Arts Funding

Investment in the arts is seen as an investment in Raleigh's future. Citizens who lead creative, expressive lives are healthy, productive citizens. Sustainable arts funding is an important issue in this plan. Raleigh has thus far funded its arts programs primarily from its General Fund revenues. With the implementation of the initiatives proposed in this plan, additional City and private funding will be required. At the same time, new funding sources should be identified and pursued. The cities that have addressed this resource need most successfully have established a dedicated revenue stream: Salt Lake County, Denver, St. Louis, Pittsburgh and Cleveland, among others. Typically, these dedicated arts funding sources have been achieved through a citizen ballot initiative that sets aside a portion of sales, property or hotel taxes to fund arts and culture. Any effort to establish such a funding system is likely to require a campaign, first to persuade the state legislature to approve the initiative, and second to persuade local residents to authorize it.

It is also necessary to encourage a higher level of private sector funding of the arts. Corporate, foundation and individual philanthropy are essential parts of the cultural support system in this country. While Raleigh is blessed with many arts patrons, foundation and corporate support are reported to be low and should be cultivated. An initial step toward greater private support would be convening business and other private sector leadership to explore the formation of a foundation that would have the potential for both increasing private giving and identifying new arts leadership. This leadership could choose to focus on priorities and initiatives from among those recommended in this plan that align with their interests. It could also play an important role in advocating for a citizen ballot initiative when that effort moves forward.

Sustainable Arts Funding Strategies

- 8.1. Increase the annual budget of the Office of Raleigh Arts incrementally as resources are needed to implement this plan.
- 8.2. Explore the feasibility of partnering with the private sector to establish an arts and culture foundation.
- 8.3. Seek private philanthropic partners and sponsors for specific initiatives (e.g., youth arts).
- 8.4. Explore development of a quality-of-life ballot initiative to create a dedicated revenue stream to support arts and cultural development.